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REVOLUTIONS

OF

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REVOLUTIONS

OF

DENMARK.

WITH

An ACCOUNT of the PRESENT STATE
Of that KINGDOM and PEOPLE.

By JOHN ANDREWS, LL.D.

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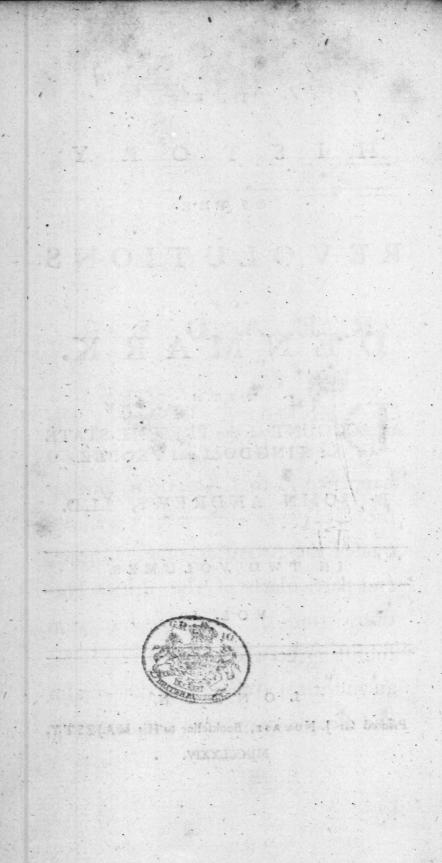
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON,

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MDCCLXXIV.



TO THE

READER.

DENMARK having by the remarkable Events which happened in that Kingdom, during the Course of the last Year, attracted the Attention of all Europe, and particularly of the British Nation, from the Family-Connexion subsisting between the two Crowns, an historical Account of that Realm and People may prove peculiarly acceptable

ceptable to the Public at this Pe-

In a Work of this Nature it was thought more expedient to select those Events and Transactions which would set the Character of that People in a clear and compendious Light, than to carry the Reader's Attention through a Maze of such Details as occur more or less in the Annals of every Nation.

In the Course of this Performance, the utmost Care has been used to steer with the strictest Fidelity and Impartiality amidst the various Writers from whom the Facts have been collected, on which the Author

has

has occasionally offered such Reflections as arose from the Subject. The principal are Pontanus, Crantz, Chytreus, Meursius, Loccenius, Puffendorf, Terlon, Chanut, Siri, Defroches, Seckendorf, Buffier, Vertot, Molesworth, Meadows. All these have long been known to the Public, though far from poffeffed of equal Merit. Further Affistance has been derived from other Publications, fuch as, the Modern Part of the Universal History, the Prefent State of Europe, the Continuation of Boffuet's Universal History, Memoirs of Denmark, Roger, Mallet, Collections of Treaties by Lamberti, and by others, the Mercure Fran-

TO THE READER.

François, and various Periodical Productions, and detached Pieces, besides some valuable Information through other Channels.

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remain to teach us any thing precise and certain, concerning the Danes, previous to the establishment of the Western empire. It was about this time they began to render themselves extremely formidable by their invasions and conquests in several parts of Europe. This early period of their history consists, however, of little else than a series of barbarities and depredations committed upon all who were too weak to resist them.

Without recurring, therefore, to the fabulous parts of the Danish history, it Vol. I. B will

will be sufficient to observe, that towards the close of the eighth century, the Danes were a very powerful nation, and extremely dreaded by the greatest princes in Eu-The emperor Charlemain, in the many expeditions he made into Germany, found them perpetually at the head of his enemies. The celebrated Viticond, chief of the Saxon nation, derived principally from Gothrick king of Denmark, the means of making a long and obstinate refistance against the victorious arms of that famous conqueror. It feems, indeed, from cotemporary writers, that all the northern parts of Germany were tributary to Denmark. The Saxons, in particular, were long used, by way of homage, to send a number of horses to the Danish monarch. on the birth of his fons.

1100.

The conclusion of the tenth, and commencement of the eleventh centuries, may be deemed the epocha of the grandeur of Denmark. Canute, justly surnamed the Great, was then on the throne. He was undoubtedly the most powerful prince in all Europe. He ruled over Denmark, Nor-

way,

way, and England; which last, after a contest of two hundred years, had, at length, been forced to receive the Danish yoke. Sweden and Muscovy were his tributaries; together with all the northern parts of Germany. All historians agree in describing him as a most consummate politician and warrior. But what adds still more highly to his character, he was not only the king of a free people, but appears by his conduct to have been a warm friend to their liberties. It is very deserving of notice, that notwithstanding the danger accruing to public freedom from the military spirit that necessarily accompanies a nation of conquerors, still the Danes preferved their liberties untouched. Canute himself, in the midst of the power and splendor that surrounded him, was fully fensible of the temper and resolution of his people in this respect. He submitted himfelf to be tried according to the common forms of justice, and to be punished conformably to the letter of the law, for a murder he had the misfortune to commit in a fit of drunkenness. It is, therefore, with

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with great reason the Danes, to this day, so warmly reverence his memory; and represent as a most wonderful and extraordinary man, a king who could bow to the laws of his country in so exemplary a manner, and at the same time maintain his authority so vigorously over every part of his dominions. Neither, on this occasion, should the magnanimity of his subjects be forgotten: nothing could better serve to prove their attachment to the constitution of their country, and how firmly they were determined to support it.

In the course of the succeeding ages, the Danes did not degenerate. Their valour and conduct were manisested on many emergencies. Notwithstanding they lost part of their conquests, England especially, whence a variety of causes concurred to expel them, yet they retained many, and continued to be a terror to all their neighbours.

About the middle of the twelfth century flourished Waldemar, the first of the name, whom the Danes esteem as great a king as any that ever reigned in their coun-

try, Canute himself not excepted. Waldemar was inferior to him only in extent of territory; but not in valour, prudence, magnanimity, and every virtue fit to adorn a throne. The reign of this illustrious monarch was full of action. Denmark was furrounded with enemies on every fide. The Saxons, the Vandals, the Norwegians, formerly its subjects, had thrown off the Danish yoke; and were now become, under their respective princes, the sworn and conflant foes to their ancient masters. They had formed a powerful confederacy against that kingdom: but the bravery and wisdom of Waldemar extricated him out of all difficulties. He found means not only to refift, but to overcome all his enemies. His successes were so great and decifive, that they were obliged to accept of fuch conditions as he thought fit to prescribe. Henry, surnamed the Lion, duke of Saxony, a very potent and enterprizing prince, was forced to fue for peace, after feveral defeats; and, notwithstanding the haughtiness of his disposition, was glad to enter into an alliance with Waldemar,

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and to thelter himself under his protection and assistance, from the hostile designs of the celebrated Frederick Barbarossa, emperor of Germany. The Vandals, in like manner, were compelled to yield to his superior policy and valour. They were completely vanquished, and reduced to submit to the humiliating terms of becoming the tributaries and vassals of Denmark. The Norwegians were brought under subjection, and obliged to acknowledge the same sovereignty.

Neither was this prince less fortunate in his domestic government. He enacted a variety of excellent laws, and was peculiarly careful to restrain the encroachments of the clergy, whose audacious pretences, founded on the ignorance of the times, hardly knew any bounds, and tended to the universal enslavement of mankind. He was no less solicitous to repair the damages occasioned by war, and to provide for the security of the commerce of his country; which, even in those days, was beginning to be considerable, and which his conduct shewed that he considered as

an object entirely worthy of the royal attention. The two noblest cities in the North, Copenhagen, now the capital of Denmark, and Dantzic, the richest and most considerable of all Poland, owe their foundation to his encouragement and muniscence.

In the midst of the perpetual embarrassments of a very active and martial reign, Waldemar found leifure to attend to the cultivation and protection of literature, as far as the darkness of that age would allow. He was remarkably zealous in promoting men of acknowledged merit and abilities to the chief employments in the state. Of this no stronger proof can be mentioned, than his placing at the head of his ministry the famous Absalon, archbishop of Lunden; a prelate, who, confidering the times he lived in, was an honour to the ecclefiastical order, and has never, perhaps, been exceeded in folid defert by any statesman, either in Denmark, or in any other country.

Waldemar was succeeded by his son Ca-1182.

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ways unworthy of his father. Aided by the counsels and experience of Absalon, and by the valour of his brother Waldemar, he sustained the reputation of Denmark, and reigned with great wisdom and success.

1203.

On his demise, his brother Waldemar was elected to the possession of the crown, with the unanimous approbation and applause of the Danish nation. He had, during the life of Canute, endeared himself to his countrymen by a feries of victories and conquests over their enemies. He began his reign by framing a great number of wife regulations for the internal government and well-being of his people. He was no less attentive to the settlement and improvement of the many provinces he had annexed to the Danish empire, before his exaltation to the throne. He greatly enlarged Hamburgh, already a thriving city. He repaired Lubec, ruined by wars and other accidents, and he founded Stralfund. The Danish writers, indeed, are very copious and warm in celebrating his management in these particulars. If fome of them may be credited.

dited, no Danish monarch ever made his country fo flourishing. Agriculture and commerce were uncommonly promoted, and the royal revenue was in consequence increased to a degree far furpassing any former proportion. The Danish fleets and armies were prodigiously numerous, and what is still more remarkable in those days, were kept constantly on foot. This policy rendered Waldemar the most formidable prince in the North, and enabled him to exercise a very strong and extensive influence among all his neighbours. He contributed greatly to confirm the fettlement of Frederic II. on the imperial throne of Germany, and to ruin the party of his opponent Otho. He kept in awe all the princes of the north of Germany. He reigned absolute master of the Baltic. He carried his victorious arms into Muscovy, and defeated a vast army of that people, who had attacked those parts of ·Livonia that were subject to Denmark.

A reign of which the greater part had been accompanied with so much prosperity and glory, terminated in a most unfortu-

nate.

nate manner. Waldemar was treacherpully feized on a hunting party by Henry carl of Schwerin, and carried away into his dominions. Here he remained in a long and fevere captivity, during which the enemies of Denmark repossessed themselves of all the conquests he had formerly made over them. In order to recover his liberty, he was compelled to relinquish them by a formal cession. To complete his misfortunes, a confederacy was formed against him by all the German princes bordering on Denmark. excited Lubec and other places to revolt. Waldemar, though much weakened by so many losses and desertions, opposed them with invincible courage; but was unhappily worsted in a battle that proved decifive against him, and totally disabled him from recovering any part of his losses.

The remainder of his reign was employed in labouring for the domestic prosperity of his subjects. In order to settle, their happiness on the surest foundation, he applied himself to the compiling a body of laws selected from the wisest and most

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approved in that age. They were made extremely favourable to the spirit of freedom that prevailed in Denmark at that time. They comprehended whatever related to the government of the state in civil and religious matters. They were digested with so much order and regularity, and were fo circumstantial, and so well adapted to all emergencies, that they have ever fince been confidered as the basis of the Danish constitution. This celebrated compilation was framed with the confent of the whole Danish nation, convened by Waldemar for that purpose; and the folicitude he shewed on this occasion. justly endeared him to his people much more than any other part of his conduct.

From the demise of Waldemar II. to 1240. the accession of Waldemar III. a century elapsed, during which Denmark became, what it often, indeed, had been formerly, a scene of civil dissensions and calamities. What principally contributed to this was the partition made of the kingdom by Waldemar II. among his sons; a measure too common in other countries in those

ages.

ages. To this it was owing that Denmark, from giving laws to its neighbours, and from being an object of terror, had been so reduced, through mismanagement and intestine divisions, that it was, in a manner, wholly fallen into the hands of foreigners. Such were the princes of the house of Holstein; who, though related to the royal family that governed Denmark, bore it an implacable enmity. The hatred shewn by the people of Holstein to the Danes, perfectly coincided with that of their masters. Hence, the disputes between them were usually attended with very fatal consequences to both parties.

now entering upon, the Holstein family was in possession of Jutland, Funen, and Zealand itself; the very centre of the Danish Dominions. Other potent families were possessed of other parts. Sweden, which hitherto had little interfered in the affairs of Denmark, held the countries of Schonen and Bleking. So fallen was the reputation of this once powerful kingdom,

that Magnus, king of Sweden, wrote to

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the court of Rome, which at that time arrogated the supreme dispensation of crowns and scepters, intreating permission to attack and subdue the kingdom of Denmark; representing it as no longer able to maintain itself by its own strength, and those who possessed it as unworthy to hold the reins of government.

Still, however, in this forlorn state, the spirit of the Danish nation was not broken. Though subject to the rule of strangers, they had manfully insisted upon and preserved their constitutional freedom. Neither, indeed, did they ever look upon these rulers in the light of sovereigns; but constantly acknowledged the king of Denmark as their supreme lord. He was even owned in the same character by all the princes of the branches of Holstein and Sleswick, and divers others in the vicinity of the Baltic.

What first rouzed the indignation of the Danes, and determined them to put an end to this disagreeable subjection, was a proposal made by the house of Holstein to that of Sleswick, to cede North Jutland

land to it, in exchange for some other territory. This highly exasperated the inhabitants; who loudly protested that they were not to be transferred from one mafter to another like goods and chattels, and refused to submit to the agreement made between the two houses. The result was, that Gerard of Holstein, a very resolute and active prince, marched an army into Jutland, refolved to compel the inhabitants to obedience. But while he flattered himself with an easy reduction of a people over whom he had long been used to domineer, the propitious star of Denmark raised him an opponent from a quarter he very little suspected. A private individual, possessed of no other influence than what arose from his personal merit, had the courage and intrepidity to lead the way in the deliverance of his country. The name of this valiant Dane was Nicholas Norevi. He was one of those sublime characters that nature sometimes produces for the admiration and example of mankind. He was a person highly esteemed for his probity and good sense, and

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was remarkable for his spirited attachment to the interest of his country. He had long been revolving how to refcue it from the hands of invaders. The enterprize of Gerard, which tended to the introduction of the most abject flavery, excited his refentment to fuch a degree, that he took the heroic determination to punish so tyrannical an abuse of power, or to perish in the attempt. In order, at the same time, the more readily to fucceed in his defigns, he acted with the utmost care and circumspection. He began by infinuating them privately to those in whom he perceived an inclination to abet and fecond them. When he thought he had gained over a sufficient number, he resolutely laid before the public the expediency of throwing off the yoke of foreigners, and of returning to the immediate government of their own natural fovereign. He affembled the principal adherents to the royal family, and exhorted them to lose no time in espoufing and afferting vigorously the cause of the young prince Waldemar, and in electing him to the throne, as the only

means

means to restore the freedom and independency of the realm. He urged to them, in the most forcible terms, the absolute necessity of taking the most signal vengeance for the injuries and affronts the nation had so long endured: a measure which appeared the more just and necessary, as the patience and tameness they had borne them with, had been, and still would be, an invitation to surther insults and oppressions, unless they boldly resolved to revenge themselves in such a manner as should prove a warning to all tyrants.

Inflamed by the representations of Norevi, they determined to be guided by his directions. He put himself at the head of a small, but chosen body of men, all of them animated with his own spirit, and set out immediately in quest of Gerard; who, secure in the number of his forces, thought of meeting with little or no opposition from an enemy to whom he was so superior. This security proved his ruin. Norevi, under cover of the night, penetrated to his head-quarters, and slew him in the midst of his guards.

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This resolute action was a prelude to the revolution that sollowed in savour of young Waldemar. The remainder of the Danish nation, fired by the bold example set them by the people of Jutland, immediately declared for that prince, and proclaimed him their sovereign.

When Waldemar III. ascended the throne, he found Denmark in a most deplorable condition. The power legally vested in the crown by the constitution, was reduced to nothing, through the concessions extorted from his father, Christopher II. This equally unhappy and imprudent prince had, at the commencement of his reign, so exasperated the whole Danish nation, by his flagrant violation of the laws, that they had unanimously dethroned and expelled him. In order to bring about his restoration, Christopher made over to all who espoused his cause, such ample assignments of crownlands, and even of whole provinces, as left him, after his recovery of the crown, entirely destitute of the means necessary to support the dignity of his character.

Thus

VOL. I.

Thus Waldemar III. found himself at first elected to hardly any more than the bare title of king. This was a fituation very irksome to a prince of his aspiring disposition. He determined, accordingly, to deliver himself out of it by every posfible method. He began his administration by an act full of justice and policy. During the troubles of his father's reign, and the interregnum that followed his demife, and lasted several years, the alienations made by that unfortunate prince, had induced the possessors of them to erect themselves into petty sovereigns; who, not knowing how long their fovereignties were to remain in their hands, and fearing, with good reason, a resumption would some time take place, were resolved to make the most of their temporary possesfions. They therefore oppressed their tenants and dependants, and loaded them with unjust exactions. Waldemar, to render himself popular, and to detach the bulk of the people from these tyrannical masters, immediately after his election affembled a diet; wherein he warmly exerted

erted himself to procure an ample restoration of all the immunities and privileges belonging to the respective orders in the realm.

This proceeding effectually answered his purpose. It secured him the affection of the Danish people, who had long borne with indignation, the dominion of these intruders, and manifested the utmost readiness to second the king in his design to rid the country of them at a convenient opportunity. Encouraged by the zeal expressed in his favour, he obliged the posfessors of the alienated districts to enter with him into such compacts as would, from their nature, prove, ere long, favourable to his intentions. By these means, he gradually re-united to the crown the various grants which necessity had wrested from his predeceffors. This, however, was not compassed without many difficulties. It was, indeed, the main bufiness of his whole reign, and of all his politics, for which this undertaking afforded sufficient employment.

Notwithstanding the success of Waldemar, in re-uniting to his domains so many provinces dismembered from them, thro' the ill management of his father, yet his reign cannot altogether be accounted prosperous. He was engaged in perpetual altercations, not only with his neighbours, but with his own subjects; to whom he often furnished cause of complaint by the fickleness of his disposition.

His character was a compound of virtues and vices, that occasioned the strangest inconfistencies in his conduct: no king of Denmark ever took greater pains to fettle and inforce the rights and privileges of every rank of his subjects. No less than five folemn diets were held in his time. for the purpose of ascertaining and confirming the liberties of the people. In one of them, the zeal of Waldemar for the welfare of the public was so remarkable, that, after entering into the minutest account of what he had expended for the fervice of the realm. he returned the furplus of the money that had been granted him, amounting to a confiderable fum.

fum, into the hands of the deputies that composed the states, to be disposed of in the manner that might be most agreeable to his people. But this uprightness of conduct was not uniform: and his imprudencies gave birth to no less than four rebellions against him; the last of which was so dangerous, that he was obliged to fly the kingdom. What renders them the more remarkable, is, that they proceeded from the inhabitants of Jutland, to whom, especially, he was indebted for his advancement to the throne. This makes it probable their grievances were not imaginary. As they had always shewn themfelves particularly zealous in defence of the crown and royal family, they would hardly have taken up arms against Waldemar, the king of their choice, unless he had given them fufficient provocation.

His behaviour in what related to the concerns of the church was equally wavering and inconstant. No prince was ever a greater dupe to the religious prejudices of those unenlightened ages, and yet none afferted his independency against ec-

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gour and firmness. His bigotry was such, that while his affairs were in the utmost consusion, and his presence was indispensable at home, he undertook pilgrimages at a great distance from his realm; as if he hoped to obtain the interposition of heaven in his favour by such means.

It was not long after his accession to the crown that he manifested his weakness in these respects, in such a manner as did confiderable prejudice to his affairs. Inflead of remaining in his own country, and carrying on the work he had so successfully begun, of claiming and re-uniting to Denmark its alienated provinces, he made an expensive voyage to the northern parts of Livonia, in order to regulate the religious affairs of the Danish districts in those quarters. Impelled by a still greater phrenzy, he next proposed to compel, by force of arms, the pagan tribes of Prussia to renounce idolatry, and embrace the Christian faith. This design, however, was prevented by a pacification concluded between these people and the Teutonic knights, A A A-1,

knights, an order of men instituted, in those barbarous ages, for the same bloody purpose, and on whose alliance and aid he chiefly relied in this enterprize.

But Waldemar was so infatuated with the superstition of the times, that, in default of this expedition, he resolved upon another, not less burthensome and detrimental. This was a voyage to the Holy Land; which he made in company with feveral other princes as infatuated as himfelf; and at a feafon when he had every call of honour and discretion to induce him to remain at home. The princes of the house of Holstein were on very doubtful terms with him; his uncle, the earl of Wagria had been guilty of a fcandalous breach of friendship in wantonly seizing on a number of Danish noblemen who were on their way to meet Waldemar on his return from Livonia, in order to accompany him in his journey to Jerusalem. But Waldemar was too deeply immerfed in his ridiculous devotions to require fatiffaction for this indignity, which, at any C. 4 other

other time, he neither would have wanted fenfibility to feel nor spirit to resent.

In this frantic pilgrimage he expended, or to speak more properly, he wasted very large sums that were greatly wanted at home; and the absurd appropriation of which, occasioned bitter complaints among his subjects; whose attachment to him began visibly to diminish on account of these extravagant proceedings.

The murmurs and discontents they occasioned from all quarters were not able
however to cure him of this unhappy
insirmity. Though suspended by that
multiplicity of perplexing occurrences
which happened during his troublesome
reign, it always returned at different intervals. Instigated by this religious madness, he paid a visit to the pope, who then
resided at Avignon in France, as divers of
his predecessors had done, to avoid the disturbances that prevailed at Rome, and over
all Italy. The same delusion carried him
afterwards to Ghent in Flanders, in order
to meet Lusignan king of Cyprus; a brave,

but

but unfortunate prince, who had been expelled from his realm by the Saracens, and was then wandering from court to court, foliciting, according to the custom of the times, the aid of all Christian princes against the infidels.

But the most notorious instance of his superstitious temper, was the measures he pursued when the last and greatest revolt happened that had almost irretrievably ruined him. Instead of remaining on the spot, and facing with coolness and magnanimity the dangers that surrounded him, he pretended the performance of a vow he had made of repairing to Rome; and, in consequence of it, he left his affairs in the most alarming disorder, and proceeded on his journey for that city.

After citing these instances of Waldemar's bigotry, his resoluteness in maintaining his authority against the pretensions of the clergy, and of the court of Rome itself, must appear equally astonishing. He was hardly seated on the throne, when he required of the Danish clergy an assistance proportionable to that of other sub-

jects:

jects: and such was his interest and influence, that they complied with this demand, and granted him a sum which must have been very considerable, since to complete it they were necessitated to have recourse to the plate of their churches, a quantity of which was melted down, and coined into money for that purpose.

Inspired with the same determination, he kept all the ecclesiastics of his dominions in profound subjection to the laws; and had even the confidence to arrest and cast into prison a bishop, and another clergyman of prime eminence, who had ventured to disobey him. This was an action full of boldness and danger, considering the temper of the times, and the blind veneration the clergy were held in by all men. But Waldemar shewed by his behaviour, on this critical occasion, that he was resolved to set them at defiance, and accordingly persevered in his severity to these ecclesiastics; who were obliged to fubmit, in spite of the clamours of their brethren, and notwithstanding the interdiction All redeer to sedants shipse

diction they, had the presumption to lay upon the kingdom.

He preserved this undauntedness in ecclefiastical matters to the very last. When that rebellion fell out which feemed to threaten his entire destruction, while he remained an exile at the emperor's court, and was endeavouring to gain the pope's good will and interpolition with his fubjects in his favour, he still retained this invincible spirit, and disdained to humble himself before him. On the contrary, upon receiving an unfavourable answer to his request, and the pope threatning to excommunicate him, in case he refused to alter his measures, he returned him that celebrated answer wherein he tells the pope, "that he owed his existence to " God, his kingdom to his subjects, and " his religion to the see of Rome, which " last, if it was esteemed too great a fa-" vour, he was ready to restore."

The reign of Waldemar may, on the whole, be considered as an epocha very favourable to the Danish monarchy. The re-union of its many dismembered parts, the

the frequent confirmation and inforcement of the laws, revived the national spirit of the Danes, that had long, through domestic consustions, lain dormant. Waldemar himself, with all his failings, was warmly attached to his country, and zealous for its honour. Though he sometimes was hurried into erroneous measures, through the violence of his passions, it cannot be denied that he contributed to remedy many abuses at home, and by the general policy of his conduct with foreign states, rendered his kingdom as respectable and flourishing, as the circumstances of the times would permit.

It may not be amiss to remark, that it was during the reign of Waldemar, that dreadful pestilence happened which defolated all Europe. But no part of it in so woeful a manner as Denmark, where the inhabitants of whole towns were swept away, and sundry districts laid almost waste. The devastation it made was so great and diffusive, that the consequences of it are felt even to this day. Large tracts of country in the interior parts of the

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the province of Jutland, have lain uncultivated ever fince that terrible calamity, which is still called in Denmark the Great Plague.

On the demise of Waldemar, a remark- 1375. able scene was opened. He left two daughters, between whose issue, after many debates, the diet resolved to confine its choice of a fovereign. The eldest, Ingeburgha, married to a prince of the house of Mecklenburg, pleaded priority of birth. But the other, Margaret, who was widow to Hacquin, king of Norway, found means to gain a majority in the diet, and procured her fon Olaus to be declared king of Denmark, and herself regent during his minority.

In the mean time Margaret, who was a woman of uncommon genius and fagacity, laboured with the utmost assiduity to win the favour of all ranks of people, by a behaviour full of condescension and affability. She succeeded so well, that at the 1387. death of Olaus, the found herfelf at the head of a very powerful party, both in Denmark and Norway; and notwithstand-

ing the objections that lay against her sex, was elected sovereign queen of both kingdoms.

This was an event that could not fail giving great umbrage to the house of Mecklenburgh, then in possession of the Swedish throne, in the person of Albert, who joined all the forces he could raise to those of his family in Germany, in order to dispossess Margaret, whose advancement to the Danish crown he treated as an usurpation on the rights of his family. But his ambition was not supported by abilities equal to those of Margaret. His conduct in Sweden had rendered him extremely unpopular. Instead of acting with that circumspection which became a prince elected by the free choice of a people, and liable to lose their favour by the least error in his administration, he behaved as if the crown had devolved to him by birthright, and as if he possessed an absolute and despotic power over the Swedes. He violated the laws; he filled all places with foreigners. What was still more dangerous, he paid no respect to the privileges

vileges of the clergy. All this drew upon him the refentment of a very confiderable part of the Swedish nation.

These discontents were secretly fomented by Margaret: who, by her emissaries, raised a powerful faction in her favour. As foon as matters were ripe for execution, she entered Sweden at the head of a Danish army; gave battle to Albert; defeat- 1389. ed, and took him prisoner. From this day, all effectual opposition from that quarter fell before Margaret, who was declared and acknowledged queen of Sweden, throughout the whole realm. The efforts made against her by the adherents to the dethroned monarch, were too feeble to avail against her superior policy and conduct. She had the address not only to secure the quiet possession of that crown to her own person, but even to transmit it to a prince of her family, as well as the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway.

But that transaction which has rendered her name most famous, is the celebrated treaty of perpetual Union, agreed upon between the three nations at Calmar. 1397.

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Margaret, whose capacious mind was ever intent on great designs, projected this conjunction between them, as the most certain measure to insure their future peace and grandeur. Had the foundation on which the erected this vast edifice remained unshaken, her intentions would have been completely answered, and she would have had the glory of founding an empire which, in all probability, would have given laws to all the North. The regulations she framed for this purpose, tended to preserve to each of the three nations their divers laws, and independency of each other in such a manner that, while they were under the obedience and direction of one fingle fovereign, still no kind of innovation was to have been made in the systems of their respective governments; and the chief confequence of their union under one head, would have been the fafety and prosperity of the whole.

This was certainly a noble and extenfive plan; but as ambition had chiefly prompted Margaret to this great undertaking

taking, when she had been so fortunate as to carry it into execution, she could not restrain the defire of ruling without controul, and extended her authority much beyond its legal bounds. As the was, however, endowed with uncommon prudence, she carried the exercise of her power no farther than she was conscious of her ability to maintain it. She was careful, at the same time, to procure herself a number of abettors and well-wishers, by her munificence and liberality to those on whom she thought she could place a wellgrounded reliance. As she knew the Norvegians and the Danes, these last in particular, were her furest friends and adherents, she loaded them with every mark of confidence and favour. In this respect the forgot her usual discretion, and was far too open and unguarded in her preference of them to the Swedes; whose jealoufy was highly excited on this account, the more, indeed, as the queen, in the fulness of her power, did not scruple to infringe some of the most essential articles of the union entered into at Calmar, by VOL. I. in-

investing a great number of the Danish nobility with places of trust and profit in Sweden. This was fo direct and manifest a violation of that treaty, that the Swedish nobles affembled in a body, and laid a formal complaint of this infraction before the queen. But Margaret, whose policy went hand in hand with her ambition, had taken no measures but what she knew herfelf in a condition to inforce against all opposition. Though she was conscious her behaviour was not justifiable, yet the loftiness of her spirit disdained to enter into any expostulation with the Swedish nobility. She met the deputation with an intrepidity and a refolution that furprized and filenced them. She told them inceringly, to be as watchful over their rights and privileges, as she intended to be over the places in her possession. The truth was, the had gradually, under various plaufible pretences, made herself mistress of almost all the fortresses and strong holds in Sweden: and was, therefore, but little concerned at the discontents expressed by the nobility.

But beside the power which was lodged in her hands by these means, she had also been careful to raise herself a no less effecfupport by her generofity to the She lived in an age when their concurrence was indispensably needed by all princes who meant to acquire and preferve authority. The influence of the clergy, in the kingdom of Sweden, was prodigiously extensive, through the immense riches and prerogatives annexed to their dignity, which eclipsed all other orders in the realm, and was a severe and heavy check even on the crown itself. person of Margaret's keen penetration, could not, therefore, but be fully aware of the necessity of living upon good terms with fo numerous and fo powerful a body of men. She careffed them accordingly, in a most extraordinary manner. She increased their revenues; she promoted them to places of the greatest importance; she took them into her strictest intimacy. She treated them, in short, with every mark of the utmost confidence and predilection.

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Her intentions were amply fulfilled by this conduct. The clergy attached them-felves closely to her. They seconded all her views, and remained firmly united to her interests; which, indeed, were their own. Emboldened by the weight which their adherence threw into the scale of the crown, she studied the extension of the royal prerogative with so much success, that no sovereign, in either of the three kingdoms of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, had ever enjoyed so great a share of absolute supremacy.

It ought, at the same time to be confest, that, notwithstanding the ambitious and aspiring disposition of Margaret, she made the power she was so eager to possess, subservient to the good of her people. She rectified numberless abuses; she enacted excellent laws in favour of the commercial and industrious classes; she encouraged the trade between Denmark and its neighbours, the hanse towns especially, by such wise and judicious regulations, that many of them subsist to this day. She introduced a regularity in the administration of justice

justice unknown till her time. She obliged all orders of men to submit to the decisions of her courts of judicature; and was particularly careful to protect the lower ranks from the oppression and ill usage of the great. On these chiefly the weight of her power fell; and they of course made the loudest complaints; as, by resuming the castles and fortresses of which they had poffessed themselves, during the civil disturbances, she deprived them of the means of becoming more confiderable than was confistent with the general welfare of the community. Certain it is the nobility had availed itself of the public calamities, to attain to a degree of power utterly incompatible with the condition of subjects. It was not, therefore, furprising, that Margaret should labour to diminish an influence, which, while it existed, rendered her situation precarious and dependent on the pleasure of that body of men.

To sum up the character of this celebrated queen, she rose to a throne through her superior abilities. She governed with

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a spirit and wisdom that equalled her reputation to that of the greatest princes we read of in history. She united three war-like nations, hitherto sworn enemies to each other. She brought them to an obedience to her person, which the most powerful of their respective monarchs had never been able to compass. She ruled them all three with uninterrupted authority. She lived respected by all her subsubjects, and dreaded by all her neighbours; and died in the midst of honours and felicities; leaving behind her a name

bours; and died in the midst of honours and felicities; leaving behind her a name fo truly and so uncommonly glorious, that the unanimous consent of the European nations has dignified her with the illustrious appellation of Semiramis of the North.

Her successor, Eric, the tenth of that name, was a prince of the samily of the dukes of Pomerania. He was grandson to Ingeburga, fister to Margaret, who procured his advancement to the throne of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, several years before her demise.

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Eric was a prince very unworthy of fucceeding to a crown which Margaret had worn with fo much lustre. He had, indeed, all her ambition, but none of her capacity. He began his reign by renewing a war with the princes of Holstein, which had been entered into by Margaret, and suspended by a truce, in order to accommodate matters on a reasonable footing. This war was carried on near thirty years with a variety of success in the field, but terminated at length to the advantage 1435. of the family of Holstein, which, by the affistance of its numerous allies, confisting of most of the hanse towns, and many princes in the north of Germany, was enabled to make head against Eric, and constrained him to leave it in possession of the countries in dispute.

To this measure Eric was the more readily induced by the confideration of the difficulties he was about to encounter in Sweden; where the people were highly incensed at the continual infractions of the treaty of Calmar, and determined to suffer them no longer. They laid their griev-

ances before Eric, and warmly exhorted him to listen to the just representations of his subjects. Finding they were resolute in their demands, he thought proper to temporize, until he had made sufficient preparations to compel them to obedience. He solemnly promised them full redress. But, as soon as he imagined himself in a condition to carry his designs into execution, he openly broke his word, and treated them with more severity than ever.

Enraged at this perfidy, the whole Swedish nation rose up in arms, and formally renounce their allegiance to Eric. In this they were certainly authorized by the conduct of that prince, who, from the beginning of his reign, had given them ample cause of complaint. He had constantly resided in Denmark, and employed the royal revenue of Sweden in purposes quite foreign to the concerns of that realm. He had filled the chief posts with Danes, and had permitted and encouraged them to tyrannize over the Swedes. But nothing excited their indignation so much as his deceiving them into a persuasion that

he would henceforth govern to their satisfaction; and that, when in consequence of the ill treatment they still experienced, fresh remonstrances were laid before him, he rejected them with the utmost haughtiness and contempt.

This conduct of Eric towards the Swedes, was aggravated still farther by his imprudent usage of the Danes themselves. He had, in several instances, betrayed an arbitrariness of disposition no ways acceptable to so free a people. But that which paved the way to their universal discontent, was his debasing the current coin of the kingdom, to the great detriment of many. The next impolitic step was a proposal to the states of Denmark, that he should have the right of naming his successor, in like manner as queen Margaret had done.

But the times were greatly altered. That high-spirited and enterprising woman never made any demand of such a nature, unless she was previously convinced that her party was too strong to be opposed. But Eric's influence was now, through ill-management, brought so low, that he met with a di-

a direct and firm refusal. The diet was inflexible in its denial, and the utmost that Eric could obtain was a permission to chuse an associate to assist him in the functions of government.

He accordingly appointed to this post, his nephew Bugislaus, duke of Pomerania; and as if he had taken a resolution to act henceforward in desiance to his Danish subjects, he advanced several German princes and noblemen to some of the most important places in Denmark.

He then proceeded to Sweden, in hopes, by his prefence, to bring about a fettlement of things in his favour. The moderation of the Swedes, on this occasion, did them great honour. Notwithstanding the many reasons they had to be offended with Eric, they generously consented to forget all the past, and to acknowledge him their sovereign, provided he would engage himself to a due observance of the laws. On his acceding to these proposals, he was again re-instated; and, in order to terminate all differences, a general convention of the three kingdoms met at Cal-

mar, where the union formerly made there was renewed, and several regulations were added with an intent to render it more perfect and complete.

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But, instead of uniting himself cordially with the people of his three kingdoms, Eric kept at a distance, as if he had been totally unconcerned at what was transacting at Calmar. He withdrew to the island of Gothland, with all the jewels and treafure he could collect, and attended by a large body of troops, as if he confidered himself in a state of hostility and warfare with his subjects. Here he received their deputations, intreating him to return and resume the management of affairs. Instead of complying with this petition, he obstinately remained in his retirement; from whence, however, he continued to issue out ordinances and edicts, equally difgusting to both Swedes and Danes. He had even the confidence, notwithstanding the visible declension of his affairs, to alienate from the crown of Denmark the island of Rugen, and to make a formal grant of it to his favourite nephew; filling,

at the same time, the garrisons of his kingdom with foreign troops. This was looked upon as a very explicit proof of his design to secure the succession of the crown to his nephew, notwithstanding the positive dissent of the Danish diet.

On the king's refusal to return to Sweden, or Denmark, the diet of both kingdoms resolved to wait no longer the capricious determinations of a prince who seemed to have forgotten what he owed to himself, as well as his duty to his subjects. He was solemnly deposed, and his nephew Christopher duke of Bavaria, son to his fifter Sophia, was elected in his room.

Thus ended the reign of Eric X. a prince who came to the crown with the universal good-will and applause of three nations: over whom, without any uncommon talents, he might have ruled in great peace and happiness. But he wanted steadiness and moderation; and, though not guilty of enormities, he broke through those engagements which are most facred, and the infringement of which is the greatest crime in the eye of a free people. Neither

1439.

ther had he policy enough to form a sufficient party in his defence; and he rashly persisted in enterprizes which he was unprovided of the means to accomplish.

Christopher of Bavaria, third of that name, instructed by the misfortunes of his uncle, determined to act in such a manner as to obviate all causes of discontent. He complied with every demand requisite to entitle him to a legal exaltation on the throne; and rendered himself so popular, that, though he had been at first elected only by the Danes, he soon obtained the concurrence of the Swedish and Norwegian diets, and saw himself invested with the possession of the three kingdoms without any effusion of blood.

His reign was remarkably mild and pacific. He exerted himself with great zeal in regulating civil and commercial matters. He settled a very beneficial connection between Denmark and the trading cities of the Netherlands. He promoted the building and incorporating of towns, and granted them numerous privileges for the advancement of business. Copenha-

gen, in particular, was greatly enlarged in his time, and under his auspices.

He had, however, a fault too common with all the Danish monarchs who possessed the crown of Sweden. He could not avoid betraying a partiality to the Danes, which proved highly offensive to the Swedes. But still he had sense and sagacity enough to keep within bounds; and was always careful not to invade any of their privileges. He behaved, in short, with so much discretion as not to afford to either of the two nations, any reason to accuse him of deviating from the stipulations mutually agreed on between him and his subjects, before his accession to the crown.

He gave a remarkable proof of his prudence in these respects. On his marriage with a princess of the house of Brandenburg, a number of German noblemen accompanied her into Denmark. Many of them obtained preferments at the court of Christopher, whose countrymen they were. This gave great offence to the Danish and Swedish nobility: and occasioned much

much murmuring and diffatisfaction. The king, who was fincerely defirous of living in perfect harmony with his subjects, could not help recalling to his mind, on this occasion, how greatly the deposition of his predecessor Eric had been owing to his predilection to foreigners. At the same time, the benignity of his disposition made him reluctant to dispossess so many perfons of their employments, of whose attachment he was well convinced. However, the duty he was under to his people preponderated. He had the wisdom and fortitude to overcome his inclinations. He affembled his countrymen, and laid before them the necessity of complying with the wishes of his subjects; who demanded no more than the observance of the promises he had made to them, and which were the price of the crown they had thought proper to fet on his head. He made them sensible, that his subjects had the clearest right to expect an acquiescence, and that a refusal would certainly involve both him and them in manifest danger. In

In consequence of this frank and ingenuous representation of the case, his countrymen submitted chearfully to a resignation of their posts; and the king generously made them all the compensation he was able out of his private purse.

Such was the character and conduct of Christopher; a prince, who, though not endowed with those shining talents that attract the admiration of the world, knew how to maintain himself in the esteem of his subjects, and to procure the peace and prosperity of the kingdom of which they had elected him sovereign.

1448.

On the decease of Christopher, the Danes made an offer of their crown to Adolphus, duke of Sleswic and Holstein: a prince of great capacity and merit, and nearly allied to the royal family of Denmark. Two motives induced the Danes to adopt this measure. The one was the certainty of placing a deserving prince on the throne; the other was the prospect of reuniting the two duchies of Sleswic and Holstein to the crown of Denmark. But his moderation was so uncommon, that

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he preferred the quiet and ease of his people to his own personal grandeur; and with a magnanimity and disinterestedness that did him more honour than any diadem, he recommended to their choice his nephew Christian, son to Theodoric earl of Oldenburg, a young prince of the most promising expectations, and every way sit to be raised to the royal dignity. This advice had its effect; and the house of Oldenburgh owed its exaltation on the Danish throne, to the recommendation of the last prince of the family of Holstein.

The first act of Christian's administration was to rescue out of the hands of
the Swedes the Isle of Gothland, which
they had seized, in order to revenge themselves on the Danes, for not concurring
with them in an election of Charles Canutson, a Swedish nobleman of great birth
and riches, to the throne of the three
kingdoms.

The partizans of Charles were very numerous in Sweden, and he was so vigorously seconded, that he resolved to in-Vol. I. E vade vade Norway, where he met with little refistance, and was solemnly crowned. Christian, however, did not remain a tame spectator of these proceedings. He had many adherents in Sweden, by whose means he greatly embarrassed the measures of Charles. The impetuous disposition of this latter could not brook the opposition he met with from such as he thought had no right to resuse him their obedience. This led him to exercise some severities which made him very unpopular.

But that step which chiefly contributed to the ruin of his affairs, was the sequestration of those church-lands that were held by illegal titles; and the prohibition of religious soundations; both of them very salutary measures in themselves, and highly conducive to the benefit of the realm; but totally repugnant to his own interest, and unreasonable at the time they were attempted.

The clergy had, as already observed, been treated by Margaret with the profoundest deference. They had ever since

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been highly considered by the court of Denmark. This was a maxim strongly recommended by that celebrated queen. The practice of it had been found the wisest policy by the Danish ministries. It had always made the Swedish clergy their fast friends, while the rest of the Swedes were at open variance with them.

On this occasion, the whole body of ecclesiastics throughout Sweden united against Charles. The archbishop of Upfal solemnly convened them in his cathedral; where throwing off his canonical habit, he put on a suit of armour, and grasping a sword and shield, he declared, in presence of the whole assembly, that he would never lay down his arms until he had dethroned Charles. Such was the ecclesiastical spirit of that age.

Unhappily for Charles, this resolute prelate was wanting neither in policy nor military skill. He exerted himself with so much activity and spirit, that he surprised and defeated Charles, who sled to Stockholm: from whence, on seeing himself closely besieged, and in danger of E 2 falling

1458.

falling into the hands of the enemy, he made his escape out of the kingdom. Upon his expulsion, Christian was, by means of the archbishop, with whom he was privately leagued, elected king of Sweden, and shortly after of Norway.

Notwithstanding the causes of the misfortunes of his competitor Charles were obvious, Christian fell into the same errors that had been fo fatal to him. differed with the archbishop of Upsal, whose affistance had placed him on the throne. He even feized upon his person, and fent him prisoner to Denmark. The consequence was an immediate revolt, in favour of Charles, headed by the bishop of Stregnes, a man not inferiour in conduct and intrepidity to his uncle, the archbishop of Upsal. He attacked Christian with fo much vigour and fuccess, that he was forced to abandon Sweden, and retire into Denmark.

Convinced by experience of the absolute necessity of treating the clergy with the utmost condescension, he determined to be reconciled to the archbishop. He

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released him from confinement, shewed him all kind of respect, and omitted nothing to atone for the harsh usage he had met with. The archbishop, on his side, promised to forget what was was past, and engaged very speedily to reinstate He returned into Sweden. Christian. where he levied a numerous army, and gave battle to Charles, who was vanquished and taken prisoner. The conqueror forced him to abdicate formally the crown, and afterwards confined him in a castle in Finland.

Christian, however, reaped little advantage from these successes. There still fubfifted in Sweden a strong party against the Danes; and the archbishop himself did not express the same zeal as heretofore for the Danish cause, owing to the remembrance of his former imprisonment. After the death of this prelate, which happened not long after, Charles was recalled, and died, at last, in possession of 1470. the throne; though his authority was reduced almost to nothing.

On his demise, the Swedes placed his nephew Steno Sture at the head of affairs, with the title of administrator, and determined to resuse further obedience to the sovereigns of Denmark. Christian made divers attempts to recover Sweden; but they all miscarried. The truth was, that his contest with Gherard, his elder brother, who had large pretensions upon him in Holstein, and was strongly supported, drew his attention too much off to that quarter, and did not allow him sufficient leisure and opportunities to prosecute his designs on Sweden.

The administration of Christian in Denmark, was perfectly satisfactory to his Danish subjects. He neglected nothing that could contribute to their honour and welfare. Industry and commerce greatly increased during his reign, and the maritime power of Denmark became formidable to all its neighbours. He was particularly zealous in rewarding persons of merit, in all professions; and in promoting to dignities in church and state, none but individuals of avowed capacity.

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His charity was particularly remarkable. He afforded the readiest and most compassionate relief to all that were indigent or laboured under bodily afflictions. Allowing for some failings of no great importance, he was, on the whole, an excellent prince. He was truly beloved by his subjects. He was respected even by his enemies the Swedes; who, towards the close of his reign, began to entertain milder thoughts concerning his pretenfions to their crown, and gave him hopes of a future election in favour of his fon. In short, the testimony formerly borne to his worth, by his uncle Adolphus of Holstein, was confirmed by the whole tenor of his life, and his memory is held in due veneration to this day.

On the demise of Christian, John, his 1481. son, was elected by the unanimous suffrages of the Danes, and Norwegians. The Swedes refusing to concur with them, John resolved to force them to it by the terror of his arms; but was dissuaded by the advice of his mother, Dorothea, a princess of great wisdom and moderation;

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who engaged him to turn his thoughts to Denmark alone, and wait a more auspicious opportunity to pursue his claim to Sweden.

In pursuance of this advice, he employed the beginning of his reign in fettling matters at home. He acquitted the debts of his father Christian with the utmost honour and generofity. He redeemed all the crown lands that still remained alienated. He framed a repartition of taxes. which, by its equitableness and propriety, brought in very confiderable fums, without proving burthensome. He had also occasion to manifest the humanity of his disposition, in consequence of a famine, followed by a contagion, both which were very fatal to Denmark; and during the continuance of which, his liberality and folicitude for the distrest, acquired him great popularity.

In the mean time, the affairs of Sweden were not forgotten. Though John abstained from hostilities, he was very active in prosecuting his interest in that kingdom. The clergy, as formerly, re-

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and many of the grandees were its well-wishers. But he had to deal with a rival of activity and valour, and who was strongly supported by the majority of the lower classes, who bore a violent hatred to the natives of Denmark.

This rival was Steno Sture, who had already fignalized himself by his long and successful opposition to Christian. He was, during a considerable space of time, no less fortunate against his son. Finding the divisions among his countrymen disabled him from acting in a bold open manner, he was obliged to temporize, and have recourse to dissimulation. He found means to amuse John by frequent promises to terminate things according to his wishes, and prevented him, by this method, from carrying them to extremity.

At length, the Danish monarch determined to refer his cause to the decision of the sword. He had long been preparing himself to this intent. He had entertained a large correspondence with

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the Swedish nobility and clergy. These, in particular, exerted themselves so effectually, that they obliged the administrator to convoke a diet, at which it was resolved, by the plurality of suffrages, that a congress of the three nations should meet at Calmar. At this meeting, John was recognized sovereign of the three kingdoms, to the great mortification of Steno; who nevertheless continued to make head against the Danish party.

John, sensible of the ability of his rival, made many efforts to overpower him by dint of numbers. He engaged the Russians, a barbarous, but a sierce and potent nation, to attack him in Finland, while he himself, at the head of all the forces of Denmark, assailed him in the heart of Sweden. The administrator's party was not able to withstand such numerous and formidable enemies. After a brave, but ineffectual resistance, he was compelled to yield to so superiour an adversary.

The fortune of Denmark preponderated every where. The Dalecarlians, in this pe-

perilous fituation of their country, affembled in a large body, and affaulted the Danish army with such fury, that the iffue of the battle long remained doubtful. Happily for John, his troops confifted of men regularly trained to war, which about this time, was beginning to be a science much more complex and difficult to attain than during the foregoing rude ages. He had in his pay feveral officers and commanders of great skill and experience. To these were owing the advantages of that decifive day. After a long and bloody struggle, wherein the Danes were great fufferers, valour was at last forced to give way to military discipline. The Dalecarlians, in spite of every effort that bravery could fuggest, were repulsed with prodigious flaughter; and John made himfelf master of Stockholm, where he was folemnly crowned king of Sweden.

It is recorded, highly to his honour, that in this fummit of his prosperity, some of his courtiers advised him to rid himself of those Swedish grandees he had now in his power, who had so long, and 1498.

fo violently, opposed him. But John rejected this barbarous advice, with a magnanimity worthy of his fortune and dignity, and continued to act, as he had begun, with mildness and clemency to all parties:

As it is difficult, however, in the fulness of victory, wholly to restrain the natural eagerness for further triumphs, John was hurried away by the torrent of his fuccesses, into an enterprize that cost him very dear. The Dithmarfians, a people inhabiting a small district in that part of Holstein which faces the Western ocean, had, during several ages, lived in perfect independency. They formed a commonwealth; and, united by the love of freedom, they had maintained themselves in this fituation against all aggressors. Christian I. had already proposed to himself the reduction of them; and, according to the strange notions of those times, he looked upon himself as authorized to make a conquest of them, after having obtained the permission of the emperor Frederick III. to whom he had represented them as

as a set of lawless, unruly people, troublesome to all their neighbours.

In virtue of this imperial licence, John resolved to annex that country to his dominions, and invaded it with one of the best appointed armies that Denmark had ever sent into the field. But his ambition met with the justest chastisement. Animated by despair, and resolved to perish in the cause of their liberty, this handful of people exerted themselves with so much vigour and conduct, that the Danish army was totally destroyed, and the king himself escaped with much difficulty.

Another consequence of this fatal expedition was, that a revolution of affairs ensued in Sweden and Norway. Steno Sture, who had long been watching for an opportunity of reinstating himself, was too provident to neglect so favourable a one as the present. The ill success of John was like a signal to all the friends of the deposed administrator. They repaired to him from all quarters; proclaimed him in his former title; and

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were joined by a great majority in Norway.

To add to these losses, Steno found means to conclude an alliance with the hanse towns, and to seize upon Stockholm; where queen Christina, consort to John, a princess of the electoral house of Saxony, fell into his hands, after making a very brave desence.

In the mean time, John dispatched his fon Christian, with a powerful armament, to reduce Norway. This young prince was very fuccefsful. He forced the Norwegians to return to the obedience of Denmark, but tarnished the glory he had acquired, by the cruelties he committed in that unhappy kingdom. He also gained feveral advantages in Sweden; but still accompanied with further proofs of the barbarity of his disposition. Nevertheless Steno, affisted by his allies, gave much embarrassinent to John. He had recovered almost all the places in Sweden held by the Danes; and was preparing to improve his fuccesses, when death put an end

1504.

end to his exploits, and to the fears of John on account of this formidable rival.

But still the Swedes, however defirous of peace, were not inclined to receive a king from Denmark. They elected another administrator. The person thus chosen was Suante Sture, related to his predecessor, and no ways inferiour to him in courage and abilities. It was in vain that John had recourse to the authority of the imperial court, which had the prefumption to declare the Swedes rebels, and to enjoin them obedience to the king of Denmark. Suante connected himself fo closely with the hanse towns, and made them so sensible of the expediency of oppofing the maritime strength of Denmark, and of preventing its increase, that these commercial states, jealous of a power that threatened an absolute dominion over the Baltic, espoused the cause of Sweden with the utmost ardour.

In the course of these hostilities, much damage was reciprocally done between Denmark and the hanse towns, Lubeck especially; which, as the principal of them,

them, and nearest to Denmark, stood foremost in the quarrel. But things were, on the whole, so equally balanced, that, notwithstanding the naval strength of the Danes, all they could do was to maintain their superiority at sea, without being able to make any considerable impression on the maritime affairs of their enemies, the hanse towns, whose circumspection and activity in the prosecution of their trade, still eluded the vigilance of the Danish squadrons.

1512.

The death of Suante Sture, which happened in the midst of these disturbances, made no alteration in favour of Denmark. The Danish faction, consisting chiefly of the clergy, was not able to prevent the suffrages of the Swedish diet from falling on Steno, son to Suante. Though not equal to his father, yet he was a man of great spirit and resolution; and as he had good counsellors, and discretion enough to follow their advice, he supported the honour of his country with firmness and dignity.

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John did not long survive the administrator Suante. He died greatly re- 1513. gretted by his subjects, over whom he had ruled with a gentleness and sagacity that made them insensible of the calamities that were the natural consequences of the wars he was so frequently engaged in. No prince could shew more folicitude in their behalf than John. He was minutely inquifitive into the causes of abundance and fcarcity, and employed himself, on all occasions, to prevent, or relieve the public distresses. He was fincerely pious; and a great favourer of men of virtue, and good character. He was particularly fond of persons of eminence for their knowledge and literature. He employed them preferably to all others, in affairs of state; gave them the freest access to his person; entertained them at his table, and provided for them with great munificence. In a word, he was a prince of great bravery, wisdom, and humanity. His reign was glorious to himfelf and happy to his people. He was no less zealous for their domestic prof-VOL. I. perity

perity than for the success of his undertakings abroad. He found means to reconcile both these pursuits, and procured uninterrupted security and plenty at home, while, at the same time, he raised the power of Denmark to a high degree, and left it in a condition to command the respect of all its neighbours.

Christian II. succeeded his father John. He was a prince of a passionate and ferocious temper: full of pride and haughtiness; of a suspicious and dark dispofition; implacable in his enmity, and carrying his refentment to the most dreadful extremities. Inheriting the pretentions of his family to the crown of Sweden, he prepared to affert them with that violence and impetuofity which characterifed all his actions. He wanted neither courage nor skill in the management of affairs, and his vigilance and activity were indefatigable. But his ambition had nothing of that heroism that so often throws a lustre on the most unjust undertakings. It was accompanied with an austerity and unfeelingness that shewed him prompted by

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by the mere lust of power and thirst of revenge.

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In order to pave the way to his defigns on Sweden, he strengthened himfelf with the alliance of the most confiderable princes in the north of Germany; and fought the friendship of the house of Austria, whose influence was beginning to be felt throughout all Europe. He conducted himself with so much address as to obtain in marriage the princess Isabella, fister to the heir of all the Austrian dominions, afterwards the famous emperor Charles V. Proud of these high connexions, Christian now set himfelf to make good his claims in Sweden. He won over to his interest the archbishop of Upfal; who, at the head of the clergy, laboured to ruin the administrator. this latter was resolutely supported by the states of the kingdom; and reduced his antagonist to very great straits. defeated a large body of Danes that were come to his affistance, and deprived that prelate of his dignity.

Christian, exasperated at the ill success of his party, determined to use every method to wreak his vengeance on the Swedes. He wrought so powerfully at the court of Rome, by his intrigues, and by the credit of the house of Austria, that a sentence of excommunication was sulminated against the administrator, and the senate of Sweden; and the king of Denmark was thereby commissioned to put it in execution, and to force the Swedes to pay due obedience to it.

Fortified with this spiritual authority, Christian entered Sweden at the head of a numerous army; and after committing the most barbarous excesses, laid siege to Stockholm. But he was very vigorously attacked by the administrator, and forced to betake himself to his sleet, which remaining long windbound, he suffered so much through want of provisions, that he was obliged to set on foot a treaty with the administrator, under pretence of an inclination to terminate all differences, but only with a view to gain means, by a truce, to supply himself with necessaries.

He proposed, at the same time, a conference with him, and even offered to come himself to Stockholm. But as soon as he had received the proper hostages for the security of his person, he treated them as prisoners, and carried them away to Denmark, where some of them died through ill usage.

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This violation of public faith rendered Christian so odious in Sweden, that his adherents were shortly reduced to a very small number; and that, even in Denmark, he began to perceive a backwardness to second him in his operations against the Swedes. He was, nevertheless, so violently inflamed with the defire of becoming mafter of that kingdom, that he resolved on making greater efforts than ever for that purpose. So passionately was he bent on this defign, that, without regarding the manifest danger he would incur by disobliging the court of Rome, of whose countenance he stood so much in need, and had already so much availed himself, he seized on the large sums of money which had been collected by a le-

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gate of the Roman see, deputed into the northern parts of Europe, to levy taxes on the credulity of the people by the sale of indulgences.

Having, by these means, and the establishing of new imposts in Denmark, replenished his coffers, he raised a very powerful army, of which he gave the command to Otho Crumpin, an officer of extraordinary reputation, who entered Sweden, where he was met by Steno, who gave him battle with his usual courage, but received a mortal wound in the heat of the action. The Swedes, nevertheless. made an obstinate defence, but were at last entirely routed, and a dreadful slaughter was made of them. This proved a decifive victory. Crumpin met with no further refistance. He penetrated into the heart of Sweden, where the consternation was fo great that he found no difficulty in forcing the unfortunate people to acknowledge Christian for their sovereign.

This may be considered as one of the most critical epochas in the history of Europe. Denmark, Sweden, and Nor-

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way were now subjected to one master; who was intimately connected with the emperor Charles V. Had the Danish monarch acted with prudence and moderation, it is highly probable that Sweden, harraffed with perpetual wars, and wearied out with a fruitless resistance, would have tamely submitted to the Danish voke; in which case, the ties of interest would have co-operated with those of relationship, and effected a permanent union between those two princes and their descendents. So powerful an alliance would have proved of the most alarming consequence to the whole Germanic body. and indeed to all Europe. The house of Austria was already possessed of more power than was confistent with the general fafety of Christendom. By the weight which the affistance of so potent a monarchy as that of the three northern crowns would have thrown into the scale, its power would have been irrefistible. What happened in the following century feems to put this beyond all doubt; when the union between the Spanish and Ger-

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man branches was too potent for the many confederacies formed against them, and would have given laws to all the empire, had not that power taken the field against them, which would, in all likelihood, have proved their fastest friend, had the union of Calmar remained in full force.

But the temper of Christian was too Sanguinary to suffer him to enjoy his good fortune with any degree of moderation. On receiving the news of the great success of his arms, the first ideas that occurred to his mind were those of blood and revenge. He was abetted in this gloomy, inexorable disposition, by the concurrence of some of his principal courtiers, whom a congeniality of fentiments had exalted to his intimacy, or whom fervility had made pliable to his humour. But the person who chiefly instigated him to the fatal measures he so often embraced, was his favourite Sigebrita, a woman, who, without the recommendation of those charms that usually captivate mankind, and even without youth, had gained an ascendency over him that was the more furprizing, as he

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was naturally one of the most ungovernable and impatient of men.

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With this woman, and her affociates, he consulted in what manner he should act in his new acquired kingdom. Pursuant to the plan they had agreed upon, he repaired to Stockholm, where he was 1520. crowned; and where, by an affectation of clemency and affability, he drew together the whole nobility of Sweden. When he found this unhappy body of men in his power, to lull them into greater security he invited them to a sumptuous feast; where, by his behaviour, he seemed to have forgotten all animosity, and to be heartily desirous of a perfect and sincere reconciliation on each side.

But these flattering appearances soon vanished. Two days had passed in mirth and diversions: but, on the third, a complaint was brought before Christian, by the archbishop of Upsal, accusing the senators, and the nobility of Sweden, of having unlawfully deprived him of his dignity, and seized the possessions annexed to that see. Christian had previously resolved

folved that no mercy should be shewn to any man that had ever opposed him, and that was of fufficient confideration to give a weight to any future opposition, The persons accused were the chief of the whole Swedish nation. This was the very circumstance most agreeable to him; as he hoped and proposed by their destruction, to put it infallibly out of the power of Sweden ever again to throw off the yoke. He did not chuse, however, to proceed against them on account of their refistance to his person; as it would have been contrary to the very condition on which he had been folemnly recognized, which was an amnesty and general oblivion of all acts of hostility.

Another pretence was found, which, however groundless and absurd, he had the audaciousness to employ as justifiable. This was the punishment they had inflicted on the archbishop, in persisting to treat him as a delinquent, and depriving him of his ecclesiastical dignities, in designee to the injunctions of the court of Rome. In those ages of ignorance, such an act was

was a crime of the deepest die. The bull which had been issued against the administrator, and the senate, empowered Christian to treat them as obstinate heretics, severed from the bosom and protection of the church, and deserving of the severest chastisements. This, in the language of those times, implied no less than death, attended with every circumstance that could make it terrible.

In order to observe the forms prescribed in such cases, Christian, pretending that he was no principal in this affair, referred it to the decision of the prelates whom the pope had commissioned for that purpose; referving to himself the execution of their judgment on the matter. The fenate and nobility of Sweden were, in consequence, arraigned before a tribunal composed of Danish ecclesiastics; who, according to their commission, proceeded against them as heretics and rebels to the decrees of the holy fee, for having deposed the archbishop of Upsal, and refused to reinstate him, in contempt of the excommunication pronounced against them

in case of disobedience. They were, accordingly, found guilty, and sentence of death was passed upon them.

Christian, without remorfe, ordered them all, without exception, to be executed. This was immediately performed in the great market-place at Stockholm. The number of those who suffered amounted to upwards of a hundred. But the barbarity of Christian was not content with this horrid facrifice of the most illustrious blood in the realm. In order to extirpate, if possible, all that might remain of a rank above the vulgar, he let loofe his foldiers upon the inhabitants of Stockholm. They broke into the houses of the principal burghers, murdering all that fell in their way, and committing every kind of outrage and cruelty.

Christian, by this general massacre of the chief persons in Sweden, thinking himself secure against all suture rebellions, acted with a despotism that knew no bounds. He loaded the Swedes with all kind of oppressions. He abandoned them to the discretion of his officers and soldiers, who who were allowed to range at large throughout the kingdom, and to plunder and destroy as they thought proper.

Satiated with blood and vengeance, he now returned to Denmark. He was so elated with his prosperity, that he quite forgot the mutability of fortune. He gave himself up to the savageness of his nature; and behaved with so little restraint, that he became an object of terror equally to his subjects and to his enemies.

In the mean time, notwithstanding his inhuman precautions, all was not quiet in Sweden. He had not so fully succeeded there in his views of destruction, but that some patriots remained who had escaped the massacre of Stockholm, and were waiting for an opportunity to vindicate the cause of their country. Gustavus Vasa was the principal among them. He was the son of Eric, a nobleman and senator of the primest rank, who was the first victim that fell in that terrible butchery. Animated with the desire of revenging the death of his father, and of

rescuing his countrymen from the tyranny of Christian, he desied all dangers: inflexible in the determination of executing his design or of perishing. He was now in the flower of his age, full of strength and courage, and of that uncommon frame of mind and body that sits men for great undertakings; circumspectful and cautious, yet quick and active in the highest degree; seeking and improving every opportunity with a foresight and vigilance which nothing could escape.

No man in Sweden gave Christian more anxiety than Gustavus. He had set a large price on his head, and his whole attention was employed in searching out the place of this young nobleman's concealment. He was at this calamitous period, hidden in the bottom of the mines of Dalecarlia; meditating in what manner he should enter on the arduous plan he had formed for the deliverance of his country. Here he tarried in daily expectation that the barbarous government of Christian would exasperate the people and become intolerable.

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. His hopes were not deceived. The substitutes of Christian acted in a manner so conformable to the example he had fet them, that in a little time things grew ripe for a general infurrection. Gustavus feized the critical hour when a large number of the country people were affembled. He appeared in the midst of them. He laid before them the deplorable fituation of their country, with that natural force and eloquence which truth and conviction inspire. The whole multitude inflamed to the highest pitch of wrath and fury, came immediately into his views. A felect body of the stoutest and most courageous was instantly formed; at the head of which Gustavus began his operations without delay. He led them to the nearest Danish garrison, which he surprized and cut to pieces. Encouraged by this first fuccess, great numbers of the Swedes joined him from all parts. Fortune still attended him; and he acted with so much conduct, that in a short time he found himself in a condition to bid defiance to his enemies, and to indulge in the brightest hopes

hopes of a speedy restoration of the independency and liberty of Sweden.

Christian was equally surprised and incenfed at these unexpected tidings. But his prosperity was beginning to decline, and he had too many difficulties to encounter at home to think of turning his attention to foreign concerns. His fubjects in Denmark had long beheld, with a jealous eye, the frequent stretches of undue authority, of which he was so notoriously guilty. He had, indeed, from the beginning of his reign, demeaned himself in the most lawless, unwarrantable manner on numberless occasions. He had established a variety of imposts without the concurrence of the states : he had seized on the property of individuals, in virtue of his own will and pleasure: he had wantonly put to death some individuals of great rank, without any legal process, and in spite of the representations of his whole court. There feemed no end of his violence and his excesses: they were extended to all ranks and orders of men indiscriminately.

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He had even the boldness to attack the clergy. The doctrine of Luther was beginning at this time to spread itself very sast in Germany. The tenets of that resolute reformer were very acceptable to a prince of the avaricious temper of Christian. He thirsted after the immense possessions of his clergy, and was glad of an occasion to lay claim to them. He openly, therefore, favoured the opinions of Luther, and ventured, in consequence, on slight pretences to sequestrate several church lands, and to treat the Danish clergy with the utmost haughtiness and contempt.

While Christian's affairs were prosperous, his injustice and oppression were borne by his subjects without any other resistance than complaints and remonstrances. He had, besides, taken very effectual precautions to secure himself against their opposition. He had raised a large army, composed mostly of foreigners of all countries. It was chiefly with these he had overcome the Swedes. His administration in Denmark was become so unpopular, Vol. I.

willing to enter into his fervice. But the moment they faw his power was on the wane, and that his enemies began to prevail, they loudly expressed their discontent and indignation at his behaviour. He still continued, however, his usual course of enormities, sporting, in a manner, with the lives and fortunes of his subjects. At length, their patience was exhausted; an universal conspiracy was formed against him, and he was solemnly deposed by an unanimous decree of the states.

Christian, in this reverse of fortune, lost all presence of mind. He was still master of a considerable body of forces; he had a large sleet; Norway, and the isle of Zealand, though disassected, were full of his garrisons; Copenhagen especially, a place of great strength, was wholly in his power. But, with all these advantages remaining, he chose to withdraw from his kingdom, without making the least effort to maintain himself on the throne. In consequence of this pusillanimeus

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nimous determination, he embarked with his family, and with all he treasure he could collect, and repaired to his brotherin-law, the emperor, from whose assistance and protection he vainly slattered himself with a restoration to his crown.

Thus ended the reign of Christian II. a prince whose character has been sufficiently drawn by the recital of his actions. At his accession, all seemed to promife him a constant course of prosperity. He inherited a rich and powerful kingdom. He was respected by his own subjects. He was dreaded by the Swedes. He was on good terms with all his other neighbours. The hanse towns, on whom Sweden chiefly relied, were defirous of continuing in peace with him. With the house of Austria he had made an honourable and useful alliance. The court of Rome was highly favourable to his pretensions. With all this partiality of fortune on his fide, and even with many serviceable qualities, Christian became one of the most unfortunate, as well as one of

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the worst princes we read of in history. Avarice and inhumanity were at the bottom of all his defigns. They defeated the purpose of all his successes. The more he grew powerful, the less he appeared worthy of his prosperity: and every additional advantage only enabled him to render himself more detested. Thus, by a feries of crimes of which there is, happily for mankind, but few instances in modern times, he became an object of terror, hatred, and abomination to all people: and fell from the height where his birth and fortune had placed him, loaded with the execration of his own, and of all fucceeding ages, which have done him no more than strict justice in styling him the Nero of the North.

Previous to the deposition of Christian, the heads of the Danish nation had cast their eyes on Frederick, his uncle, duke of Holstein; a prince of a mild and peaceable disposition. They acquainted him secretly with their designs, and found no dissiculty in convincing him of the necessity to deprive of the regal power a prince

prince who abused it so scandalously as Christian.

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On the flight of this latter, Frederick was proclaimed his successor, by the people of Jutland; who had led the way in renouncing allegiance to Christian. Copenhagen still held out for him: but the new monarch immediately laid siege to that city, and obliged it to surrender: after which the remainder of Denmark, together with Norway, submitted to him; and he was, in a general diet, formally acknowledged sovereign of both kingdoms.

In the mean time, Gustavus was carrying all before him in Sweden. He had reduced the Danish party to such an extremity, that, after wresting from them all their fortresses and strong holds, he was now besieging Stockholm, the only place remaining in their hands. The Swedes, full of admiration and gratitude for the great services he had done his country, had unanimously elected him their king. This event, together with the impossibility of receiving any succours from

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Denmark, induced the garrison to deliver that city into his possession. Thus Gustavus found himself complete master of Sweden.

There arose, however, a fresh pretender to his crown in the person of Frederick of Denmark; who, although a prince of great moderation, was stimulated by the active and enterprizing among his courtiers, not to drop his pretentions to that kingdom. But the chief promoter of them was the archbishop of Upfal. This wicked man had co-operated with Christian in all the enormities he had been guilty of in Sweden. He had openly abetted the massacre of Stockholm; if, indeed, it was not owing to his instigation. He certainly was the principal accessary to it by the accusation he preferred against the fenate. He was one of those men who in the pursuit of their defigns regard not the means they employ, and have hardened themselves into an infentibility for all the mischiefs they may occasion. Driven out of Sweden by the fuccesses of Gustavus, he had taken refuge

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fuge in Denmark, where he exerted himfelf to nourish the enmity subfifting between both nations. He was perpetually representing to Frederick, that it was incumbent on him to affert with vigour the claims transmitted to him by his predeceffors. That notwithstanding Gustavus had feated himself on the throne, yet it would be far from impracticable to bring about another revolution, provided it was attempted with a due spirit. That the the Swedish clergy, though obliged to diffemble at present, was well affected to Denmark: and waited but the first opportunity to declare themselves in its fayour. That their power alone was equal to that of the nobility and gentry, and that if they were well feconded he would find them a match for both.

Through these, and the like arguments, that artful prelate prevailed upon Frederick to enter the lists against Gustavus. The first step taken by the Danish monarch, was to be solemnly crowned king of Sweden, by the archbishop: a ceremony that only served to render him ri-

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diculous, and to irritate Gustavus; who fent him word that he wore his crown at the point of his fword; and that if Frederick was ambitious of wearing it, he should come and take it from him, and not feek it at the hands of priests. Frederick, however, dispatched an ambassador to Sweden, in order to complain to the diet of their infraction of the treaty of Calmar, by the elevation of Gustavus. But the Swedes treated his claims with contempt and indignation; and to convince him how little they valued them. they took the opportunity of his presence, unanimously to vote the archbishop, and every adherent and abettor of Frederick, a traitor to the realm.

The ambassador returned to his master; and soon made him sensible that it was no longer time to propose a reduction of Sweden, which was now governed by a monarch whom it was much more his interest to live on good terms with, than to provoke by needless efforts to dethrone him. This produced an intercourse between the two monarchs of a more amicable

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cable tendency. They were both soon apprized of the expediency of coming to an agreement. Christian, though an exile, was at the court of the emperor Charles his brother-in-law, whose power and interest was fully sufficient to restore him, if his enemies were disunited.

But an accident happened which, at that feafon, prevented an accommodation. The ifle of Gothland was in the hands of Norbi, a Danish officer; who, since the revolt of Denmark against Christian, had governed it as his own property. He was a bold and enterprizing man, and proposed to himself no less than absolute independency. His conduct, however, rendered him excessively obnoxious. He not only carried on himself, and openly encouraged his people in committing piracy, but he countenanced and protected all the pirates in the Baltic Sea. Guftavus, in order to secure the trade of Sweden, fent a body of troops against the island: which he reclaimed as a dependency of the crown of Sweden. Norbi, judging himself unable to withstand the Swedes.

Swedes, offered to refign the island to Frederick, who very readily came into his proposal. This created a jealousy between him and Gustavus, who highly resented his interfering in that affair. After much altercation, the fear that Christian should avail himself of these disputes, induced both monarchs to terminate them, by confenting that each should retain possession of what he held.

They were not deceived in their apprehensions from Christian. He had long been meditating an invasion of Denmark; and had now collected a large body of troops, with which he fet fail from Flanders, where he had, during some time, resided. He made a descent in Norway, and marched towards the frontiers of Sweden, in hopes of an infurrection among the disaffected part of the nation, a large proportion of which was greatly incenfed at Gustavus, on account of his having embraced and introduced Lutheranism into the kingdom. But the vigilance of this prince eluded all his efforts on that quarter; and Frederick, on his fide, fent a fleet

fleet and army in quest of him. Thus prest on both hands, Christian was, after a fruitless resistance, obliged to surrender himself to the Danish generals, who conducted him to Denmark, where he was kept in consinement the remainder of his life.

Delivered from this enemy, Frederick had leifure to attend to religious matters, which now occupied the minds of his subjects beyond any other concerns. prodigious reformation in them had been effected through the countenance and protection the doctrines of Luther had met with in Germany. His opinions had spread themselves into Denmark, and were highly favoured by Frederick. But the Danish clergy, who dreaded the establishment of a persuasion that would, of course, deprive them of their riches, opposed it with all their might. could not, however, stop its progress. The generality of the people came gradually into the fentiments of the reformers.

To obviate the ill effects of the animofities subfifting between both parties, the king called a diet. Here he openly professed his adherence to Lutheranism: and it was enacted that a full toleration should be allowed to the professors of either religion. This gave the finishing blow to the Romish persuasion in Denmark. The bishops and their partisans, being restrained from persecuting the Protestant preachers, these exerted themselves with fo much warmth and affiduity, that, in a little time, they made a multitude of profelytes; and Frederick, who was very zealous in their cause, had the satisfaction he had long and earnestly defired, of seeing his kingdom freed from the jurisdiction of the court of Rome.

When this event, and the share Frederick had in it, is considered, it is no ways surprizing that his memory has been blackened by the adherents to popery: but, when religious prejudices are set aside, they cannot disown the general candour and moderation of his character. It is plain, from all his actions, that he sincerely

cerely fought the peace and happiness of his fubjects. He had the wisdom to discover the impropriety of involving them in pernicious disputes with their neighbours the Swedes, on account of his family pretentions to the fovereignty of that nation. His declining to inforce them, was the most falutary measure of his reign. It was to his fatal obstinacy in afferting them, that Christian II. principally owed his misfortunes. It was by the same erfor in politics, his other predecessors on the Danish throne had reigned with so much uneafiness and disquietude. Denmark, while this bloody quarrel fubfifted in full vigour, never enjoyed any permanent repose, and was perpetually drained of its substance to support it. Had Frederick, therefore, done no more than put an end to this destructive contention, he deferved the highest acknowledgment from the Danes. He rendered them a fervice of which they stood in the most absolute need. Had he acted otherways, he would, in all probability, have brought them into the greatest danger, if

not to inevitable ruin. Sweden, the hanse towns, and Christian, supported by the house of Austria, would have proved too many enemies for them to cope with, and with these they would infallibly have had to encounter. Christian, in order to recover Denmark, would have made any concessions to Gustavus. The hanse towns had too many motives to dread the maritime aggrandizement of Denmark, not to afford their affistance in raising it a rival in the Baltic; and Charles V. was too ambitious to refuse his aid to a prince, who, if restored, might have proved such a check to the northern princes of Germany.

1533.

On the demise of Frederick, Denmark was thrown into great confusion. The Romish party, awed by his power and policy, began to move every where; and to entertain hopes of repossessing itself of its former authority. A diet being summoned, in order to proceed to the election of a king, the bishops, and their adherents, found means to defer it. Had they been able to secure a majority of

of votes, their choice would have fallen upon John, the fecond fon of Frederick. But the nobility, and the other orders, were averse to it: and would have chosen Christian, the eldest, a prince of proper age and qualities to govern. But there lay a material objection against him on the part of the Romish clergy. He was a Protestant; and seemed as determined a foe to popery as his father had been. This, of course, drew upon him a sentence of perpetual exclusion from the throne. Against this, however, the reformed party protested. In consequence of these altercations, nothing relative to the fuccession was decided by the diet.

In the mean time, the enemies of Denmark took this opportunity to stirup commotions in that country, and to form schemes for its detriment. Lubec, the principal of the hanse towns, had raised itself by commerce to such consideration, that it was now become, in a manner, the metropolis of that samous association. Its motions directed those of all the rest; and from this circumstance it was enabled

abled to act the part of a powerful friend, or of a formidable enemy. Such a fituation had so elated the regency of that city, that it more than once forgot from whence its grandeur arose, and quitted the character of merchants, for that of warriors; in which they were not always successful. Denmark had often reduced them to great distress; and had it not been the interest of the neighbouring powers to preserve its independency, that proud city would more than once have fallen into the hands of the Danes.

At this period, however, it imagined itself in a condition to give laws to Denmark. The religious and political disturbances that were now harrassing that kingdom, inspired the regency with a resolution to make an advantage of them. It seems their design was totally to alter things in Denmark and Sweden. They projected nothing less than a restoration of Christian II. in both kingdoms. They doubted not the consequences of this would be a renewal of the hostilities that had so long harrassed both these realms,

and of the civil feuds that would, in that case, naturally take place in Sweden, as heretofore. Thus, while both those nations were involved afresh in their old quarrel, Lubec would have had it in its power to engross the whole trade of the Baltic; and by affishing alternately the weaker of the two, would have found means to eternise the contest between them.

Such appears to have been the ultimate views of the regency of Lubec. They exerted themselves with great vigour in the profecution of this bold defign. By pretending to replace Christian II. on the Danish throne, they drew over a number of the disaffected in that nation, especially the whole remnant of the Danish Roman clergy, and their adherents. Christopher, a prince of the house of Oldenburg, a factious and turbulent man, was placed at the head of this confederacy in favour of Christian. Troll, the deposed archbishop of Upsal, of whom so frequent mention has been made, tired of leading a life of tranquility, resolved once more VOL. I.

to take up arms for a prince in whose cause he had been so great a sufferer.

They began their operations by fummoning Christian, son to the late king Frederick, to set at liberty Christian II. whom he kept a close prisoner. On his refufal, they fell upon his duchy of Holstein; but were repulsed by Rantzau, a general of great fame and experience; who, after this first success, marched to Lubec, where he defeated the confederates a fecond time, and reduced the city to great streights. Nevertheless, Christopher of Oldenburg, at the head of a large fleet and army, invaded the Danish dominions. He made himself master of Schonen and Zealand. Copenhagen itself was forced to furrender, and he proclaimed every where Christian II.

In the mean time the province of Jutland, the largest and most considerable in Denmark, determined, in conjunction with that of Holstein, to elect Christian, the son of Frederick. Gustavus of Sweden, declared in his favour, and repairing speedily to the assistance of his party in Scho-

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nen, prevented Christopher of Oldenburg from executing on the nobility of that province, a defign fimilar to that which Christian II. of Denmark had given the example of at Stockholm. This bloody minded prince was completely overthrown, and loft the best part of his officers and army. The forces of Lubec were no less unsuccessful in the island of Funen; where, encountering with Rantzau, they were routed with very great flaughter. In this last action, the archbishop Troll received a wound which proved mortal, and terminated a life which had been fpent in a variety of scandalous plots and machinations against his country.

In the midst of these successes, Christian was solemnly crowned king of Denmark. This he did in order to strike the greater damp into his enemies, and to shew them how little he was apprehensive of their prevailing against him.

During these transactions, Charles V. whose ambitious views extended to every part of Europe, bethought of setting up another opponent to the Danish monarch,

instead of Christian; whose imprisonment was an infurmountable obstacle to the schemes of that emperor. A daughter of Christian was married to the elector Palatine. In consequence of this alliance, Charles determined, if possible, to raise this German prince on the Danish throne. He openly encouraged and abetted his pretensions to it. But it was now too late. Christian had made so effectual a progress in delivering his dominions from foreign invaders, that little now remained to be recovered. The regency of Lubec, fensible of the impracticability of the plan they had at first proposed, were desirous of finishing an expensive and tedious war; from which they had derived nothing but difgraces, and which had involved them in the most imminent danger. They concluded a peace with Christian, who acceded to it the more readily, as he knew the refult of it would necessarily be the reduction of Copenhagen, and the entire expulsion of Christopher of Oldenburg; who began himself to aspire at the Danish crown, as well as the elector Palatine.

Accordingly, as foon as Christian had come to an agreement with Lubec, he fo closely, and so vigorously prest Copenhagen, that the garrison, almost perishing with famine, and destitute of all hopes of fuccour, could hold out no longer. Christopher of Oldenburg was forced to open the gates, and commit himself to the mercy of an enemy whom he had fo highly offended. But, notwithstanding this mischievous prince had been the principal author of all the troubles that had fo long afflicted Denmark, and endangered Christian's title to the crown, that generous monarch pardoned him, together with feveral others, who had as little reafon to expect his clemency; especially George Munter, a leading man in Schonen, who had been the chief instigator of the opposition made against him in that province, and had been guilty of some very odious excesses.

Christian, having thus overcome all his 1537. enemies, and firmly established himself on the throne, it was now his turn to call the Danish bishops to account, for the inve-

teracy they had shewn to his person, by endeavouring to exclude him from the fuccession. He was the more emboldened to treat them with severity, as Gustavus, his ally, kept no measures with them in Sweden. In conformity to this precedent, Christian resolved to destroy all the authority and jurisdiction of the bishops and clergy in temporal matters. In this he met with the concurrence of the nobility and gentry; who were equally defirous of shaking off this heavy yoke. A diet was affembled for this purpose, wherein it was determined that all the territorial possessions and lordships annexed to the church, should henceforth be vested in the crown. The heads of the clergy made very spirited remonstrances against this decree; but it passed in spite of their opposition.

In consequence of this general resumption of church lands, the Romish clergy were reduced to a very forlorn condition. Their complaints were loud and bitter against Christian: but that prince, who bore them deep resentment, instead of yielding yielding to their clamours, availed himfelf of their invectives against his person to mortify them still farther. It cannot even be denied that he carried his revenge much too far. The deprivation of their riches was certainly a sufficient punishment for their opposing his election to the crown: but the king, sinding he had the majority on his side, gave them no quarter; numbers of them were apprehended and imprisoned, and many of them very cruelly treated.

In order to complete the new system of ecclesiastical affairs, articles were drawn up, which the clergy throughout the whole realm were required to subscribe: all that refused were banished; this was the case of great numbers, in whose room reformed ministers were substituted.

This settlement of religious affairs, was accompanied with another no less agreeable to Christian. The kingdom of Norway, during the commotions in Denmark, had remained under the controul of Olaus, archbishop of Drontheim. This prelate was very powerful, and, in many

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respects, resembled the famous primate of Sweden, Eric Troll. Like him he had resolved that prince should possess the crown, on whose devotion to the clergy he could most rely. For this reason he embraced the party of Christian II. and next of the elector Palatine. Christian III. had fent deputies to Norway, to exhort the states to remain united with Denmark. But the archbishop, gained by the house of Austria, acted openly against that prince. He feized his deputies, and committed great cruelties on his adherents, in expectation of being quickly joined by the elector; who promised to fecond him at the head of a formidable fleet and army. But, when he faw Denmark entirely reduced under the obedience of Christian, and the Romish religion abolished, he lost all courage, and offered him terms of accommodation. But the Danish monarch disdained treating with a man whose conduct had rendered him detested by his countrymen. He prepared a large armament to attack him: this fo effectually intimidated the archbishop, that,

giving up all thoughts of refistance, he fled, and left Christian in full possession of Norway.

Still, however, the restless spirit of the 1542. emperor Charles V. gave this prince much uneafiness. Christian II. when he obtained the fifter of Charles in marriage, had engaged that, in case of failure of male iffue, that prince should succeed to his dominions. Charles, in consequence of this promise, left no method untried to pave a way to fo confiderable a fuccession. That was the motive of his supporting the elector Palatine; whom, had he raised to that throne, he flattered himfelf he could govern as his delegate. These confiderations contributed strongly to cement the union between Frederick and Gustavus, who was equally concerned in this affair, and against whom the efforts of the elector, and the defigns of the emperor were no less directed.

Frederick, on this occasion, acted the part of a faithful ally. He affisted the Swedish monarch with troops and money, and highly contributed to the suppression

of some very dangerous insurrections, formed by the artifice of their common enemies.

He also equipped a large fleet that was intended to affist the operations of Francis I. king of France, who had made an alliance with the two Northern crowns. The object of its destination was Flanders, between which and Denmark very fierce hostilities were carried on by sea.

These vigorous measures rendered Christian so formidable, that his enemies lost all hopes of carrying their defigns into execution. This brought on a pacification, of which they were in great want. The Dutch and Flemish trade had suffered confiderably in the course of this war. Christian, who was master of the Baltic, had grievously obstructed it; and it was become necessary for the interest of the Netherlands, to put a stop to the losses the merchants were daily meeting with from the Danish privateers. A treaty of peace was made between these provinces and Denmark; to which Charles V. acceded, not long after, for his other dominions.

1544.

Thus

Thus ended a long and dangerous contest; wherein the courage, the vigilance, the policy of Christian III. were continually displayed, and procured him equal honour and fuccess. The remainder of his reign was attended with great tranquillity. Notwithstanding the mortification he received from the measures adopted in Sweden, he wifely forbore to involve himself in disputes with that people. A declaration had been made by the Swedish diet, whereby the crown was fettled on the descendents of Gustavus. This cut off all the hopes and pretenfions of the house of Oldenburg; but Christian was too prudent to tread in the steps of those Danish princes who, by prosecuting the conquest of that monarchy, had nearly ruined their own. He contented himself with a spirited remonstrance, on this occasion, to the Swedish diet; and, in order to shew, at the same time, that he was not to be intimidated from afferting what he deemed his right, he directed coins to be ftruck, whereon the arms of Sweden were quartered with those of Denmark.

Instead of indulging ineffectual refentments, Christian was intent upon profecuting the folid welfare of his subjects. Actuated by this laudable motive, he decided in favour of the cities of the hanfeatic league, a question which arose in the affembly of the states of Denmark. Exasperated at the hostile part they had taken in the late disputes, many of the members proposed to exclude them from the liberty of trading in the Danish dominions. But the king had too much penetration not to perceive that fuch a meafure would be wounding Denmark, thro' the fides of its enemies. The states were made duly sensible of this truth; it was judged most adviseable, therefore, to abstain from a revenge that would recoil upon themselves; and the hanse towns enjoyed a full continuation of their former privileges.

This judiciousness of conduct accompanied him to the last. He was always attentive to such counsels as conduced to promote a good understanding between all parties, and was zealous in suppressing the causes causes of reciprocal animosity. To this it was owing, that, after settling the peace of his own dominions, he constantly avoided coming to any rupture on some occasions, which, had he listened to ambition, might have been productive of great disputes. This temperance and moderation won him the affections of his subjects, and the respect of all his neighbours; and he died with the character of a prince who had done honour to the choice of the people who had elected him their sovereign.

1557.

On the death of Christian III. his son, Frederick II. ascended the throne, in virtue of an election made ten years before. He had been very carefully educated by his father; who availed himself of his promising qualities, and the expectations they had raised in the public, to secure him the possession of the royal dignity. His affection for him was such, that he even made him his associate, and had him solemnly crowned king of Denmark and Norway.

Frederick did not frustrate the hopes entertained of him: as soon as he found himself sole possessor of the throne, he resolved to signalize his accession by some notable action. As he was at peace with Sweden and the hanse towns, he had no pretence to seek for reputation at their expence, and was obliged to look nearer home for the gratification of his desires. But as objects of ambition are easily found, or created, he soon discovered a scene whereon to figure in the manner he proposed.

The people of the province of Ditmarsh, ever since the terrible deseat of John, king of Denmark, great uncle to Frederick II. had enjoyed uninterrupted possession of their independency. Proud of having overthrown the most potent monarch in the North, their courage increased to such a degree, and they always shewed themselves so ready and prepared to desend their liberties against all invaders, that for the space of threescore years they were lest in full peace. Doubtless the many disputes wherein the house of Oldenburg had been involved, added not a little to their fecurity. After Christian III. had effected a general pacification throughout Denmark, it was debated, in council, whether he should turn his arms to that quarter. His brother Adolphus, a prince of a hot, impetuous temper, was keen for the measure. But Christian, inclined to rule over his dominions in peace, prevented it from taking place during his reign.

Adolphus found his nephew Frederick more willing to enter into his defigns. An army was levied, and a fleet equipped: this blocked them up on the fide of the ocean, and cut off all resources by sea, while they were assailed by land, on that part of the country that lies towards Germany. This invasion was wholly unexpected. These people, however, did not recede from that undaunted character they had so long maintained. They bravely resolved to stand their ground, and make the most obstinate resistance.

In order to preferve an appearance of justice and formality, they were summoned

by an herald, to acknowledge the fovereignty of Denmark: their answer was such as became a free and spirited people: it was expressed in terms sull of sense and magnanimity, disproving the pretensions of the house of Oldenburg, and appealing to the king's own conscience for the inequitableness of his demands.

On their refusal to submit, the Danish army entered their country, and laid fiege to Meldorp, the capital; which, though a place of no strength, was defended to the last with the utmost valour, and taken by storm. Flushed with this success, the Danes attacked the main body of the Ditmarsians. The conflict was very long and bloody; but, the same thing now befel the unhappy Ditmarsians, that had befallen the Dalecarlians in the famous battle against the Danes under the walls of Stockholm threescore years before: their intrepidity could not prevail against military knowledge and discipline. The Danish army was commanded by a general of the name of Rantzau; a family, famous for producing great warriors, and

to whose talents in the field the house of Oldenburg was highly indebted for its present grandeur. Duke Adolphus himfelf was a prince of uncommon bravery and skill: he had ferved in feveral German wars, where he had acquired much honour and experience. He diffinguished. himself on this memorable occasion in a very particular manner: though wounded, he fill remained in the hottest of the fight, and thrice rallied his troops, whom the desperate valour of the enemy had forced to give way. After a violent struggle. victory declared for the Danes: it was as complete and decifive as they could wish. The vanquished were obliged to sue for a truce; which was granted them; and articles were, at the same time, drawn up, to which they were injoined formally to declare their submission. As they faw themselves unable to make any further resistance, and had no prospect of relief from any other quarter, they consented to the conditions prescribed by the conquerors. They folemnly paid homage to the king of Denmark, as their lawful fo-VOL. I. vereign,

vereign, and took an oath of perpetual fidelity to him and his fucceffors. agreed to the payment of a fum of money, by way of defraying the charges of the war, and to yield the same obedience as the other subjects of Denmark, in the contribution of taxes, and other fervices required by government. In order to fecure the performance of these engagements, hostages were demanded from them: they were also required to deliver up their arms; and to efface, as much as possible, the remembrance of their former triumphs over the Danes, the restoration of the standards, and other military trophies, taken from these fince the accession of Christian I. was insisted upon: they were fain to comply with all these injunctions.

1559.

In this manner was destroyed the republic of Ditmarsh, which had subsisted upwards of sour centuries. Frederick had certainly no right to invade and conquer it, but that of superiour force. The donation made of it by a German emperor to one of his predecessors, was no less unjust than the gift of America to the king of Spain by the pope. Whatever the fayourers of Frederick II. may pretend, the acquisition of this territory was not equal to the loss of esteem his memory will fustain with the unprejudiced world.

This reduction of Ditmarsh did not a little awaken the attention of his neighbours. By acting in fo violent a manner, he openly avowed his refolution to enlarge his dominions, when opportunities offered: and though fuch a dispofition might be acceptable to his own fubjects, it was equally difagreeable and alarming to others; to the Swedes in particular; who began to suspect him of harbouring defigns contrary to the common interest of both kingdoms.

The great Gustavus, the restorer of the Swedish monarchy, was now dead. He 1560. had been succeeded by his eldest son Eric: this young prince was defirous of continuing the friendly intercourse that had been carried on between Sweden and Denmark to their mutual advantage. But Frederick, it seems, was tinctured with the

ambition of his predecessors respecting Sweden; which was further heightened by the countenance he received from Poland and Russia, both which had offered to enter into a league with him against that kingdom. He came accordingly into that measure, so far as to supply the Russians with a body of troops in their attack upon Finland. He also arrested the Swedish ambassadors, who were on their way to Germany; and feized all their dispatches, notwithstanding the safe conduct he had granted them through his dominions. These proceedings, together with his constant refusal to drop his pretensions to the crown of Sweden, convinced Eric he had all reason to expect that Frederick would become a most dangerous and troublesome foe.

The more to strengthen himself in the execution of his projects, Frederick was careful to make an alliance with Lubec. This city was highly provoked at Sweden, for having retrenched several of the privileges it had extorted from Gustavus, at a time when he needed the assistance of

its marine. That great monarch had, however, put the maritime department of his kingdom on fuch a footing, that, not withstanding the junction of the two fleets of Lubec and Denmark, that of Sweden engaged and defeated them.

1563.

Eric, however, was still very much inclined to terminate matters amicably. He justly dreaded the vast confederacy formed against him. He sent, therefore, some of the principal persons about him to Frederick, with very advantageous offers. But the Danish monarch had made such ample preparations for war, and thought himself in so superiour a condition to his enemy, that he would hearken to none. He had reason, however, to repent: his exploits, during the ensuing campaign, terminated in the taking of one town only on the frontiers of Sweden; and Eric so harrassed his army, that he was willing, the following winter, to alter his conduct, and endeavour to procure a peace. Eric was now as averse to it as Frederick had been; but he had equal cause for repentance: his army, though numerous, ef-

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1564.

fected nothing remarkable; and his fleet encountering with that of Denmark, was totally defeated, with the loss of above half the ships that composed it.

This event greatly alarmed several of the hanse towns. Notwithstanding the alliance of Lubec with Denmark, and the influence of that city over the hanseatic league, in general, yet there remained some who disapproved of its union with that crown, as throwing too great a weight into the scale against Sweden. They resolved, therefore, to affish the latter, and did it so effectually, by providing it with necessaries for the equipment of its sleets, that the Swedes soon sound themselves able to face the Danes at sea, where they gained a signal victory over them.

Their fortune was quite different at land. Eric, elated with the number of his troops, attacked the Danish army, inferiour in strength, but commanded by that Rantzau who had conquered the Ditmarsians. The Swedish monarch lost the battle, which indeed was fought with

great

1567.

great fury, and attended with prodigious 1565. flaughter on both fides.

The two next campains were equally 1566. unfavourable to Eric. He was unable to face the Danes in the field; and met with a very severe repulse in his attempt on Norway. That which followed was still 1568. more fatal. Rantzau, at the head of the Danes, penetrated into the heart of Sweden. He took and destroyed several considerable towns, and spread the alarm as far as Stockholm. Eric, to avenge these disgraces, affembled a large army, which marched with all expedition to put a stop to the progress of the Danish general. But this vigilant and active commander fell upon it by furprize, while he was imagined at a great distance, and gained an entire victory. The Swedish army lost all its artillery and military stores, besides the slain and the prisoners; both which, the latter especially, were very numerous.

Incensed at this defeat, Eric collected the remains of this routed body, to which adding strong reinforcements, he ventured another engagement with the

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conqueror; but with no better fuccess. He was completely beaten, and lost many of his chief officers, in particular Bielke, who had commanded the Swedish army in the preceding unfortunate battle, and Banier, ancestor to the famous captain of that name, who, in the subsequent century, made so splendid a figure in the Swedish wars in Germany. They were both brave and able officers, though inferiour in military merit to Rantzau.

These repeated losses brought Sweden to a very low condition. But what rendered them still of worse consequence, was the difunion that prevailed among the Swedes. Eric, king of Sweden, was a prince of great courage and fome abilities: but his temper was so hot and violent that it occasionally deprived him of the use of his reason. The great Gustavus, his father, dreading the effects of this misfortune, had once entertained thoughts of fettling the fuccession on his fecond fon John, a prince of a cool and temperate disposition. This excited the jealousy of Eric, who seized and imprisoned his brobrother, on suspicion of his aiming at the crown. John was much more beloved than Eric: his adherents rose in great numbers, deposed Eric, and placed John upon the throne.

These civil diffensions, which happened during the war with Denmark, contributed very much to facilitate the progress of Frederick's arms in Sweden. They became, at last, so formidable, that king John, who was but just seated on his brother's throne, fearful lest any fresh disturbances should weaken his party, consented to a very difadvantageous peace. He ceded to Frederick a number of important places in Sweden: he gave up others long contested by his predecessors: he agreed to fatisfy the city of Lubec in its demands on Sweden, many of which were highly exorbitant and unreasonable. In fhort. he hardly refused Frederick any request he thought proper to make. Had the Danish monarch been more moderate, he might have ended a glorious war by a profitable peace. But as he faw that John was desirous to purchase tranquillity at any rate,

he resolved to set no limits to his demands. He insisted that the Swedish monarch should allow him to quarter the arms of Sweden with those of Denmark: and John had the weakness to assent to this requisition.

But the senate of Sweden was highly displeased with so ignominious a treaty, and expressed its indignation with so much firmness and spirit, that John was obliged to dilayow all that had been done. He made other offers to Frederick: but they were anguly refused, and both parties prepared for fresh hostilities. The Swedish nation was so deeply provoked at the fuperiority assumed by Frederick, at the late treaty, that they came into the views of their rulers with uncommon fervour and alacrity. Numerous forces were immediately raised, which invaded the province of Schonen, and made themselves masters of several places of consequence, and encountered the enemy on feveral occasions with great vigour and success. The Danes, on their fide, acted with no less courage; but, notwithstanding they succeeded in fome

fome enterprizes, they met with the greatest misfortune that had befallen them during the whole course of this long and terrible war. Their famous Rantzau, the most accomplished and victorious general in the North, was flain at the fiege of 1569. Wardeberg, a town on the frontiers of This, at the time, was an ir-Sweden. reparable loss, as he was confidered equally by the Swedes and Danes as the completest and most expert warrior in either kingdom.

Frederick, in the mean while, was warmly occupied in devising means to diftress Sweden. The large country of Livonia had long borne with impatience the weight of Russia, Poland, and Sweden: all which pretended to an exercise of sovereignty over it. The various claims of these three nations had produced so many calamities in this province, that the inhabitants, weary of feeing themselves a subject of perpetual contention, resolved to use the natural right of every free people to chuse their own rulers. They accordingly elected Magnus, duke of Holstein,

stein, their fovereign. He was uncle to Frederick, who refolved to support a prince with whom he was fo intimately connected, and between whose dominions and his own a federal union subfifted of a very useful and beneficial nature to both. He had another advantage in view: this was the diversion such a measure would necessarily occasion to the Swedish arms. Full of the expectations which arose from this prospect, he espoused the cause of the duke with all imaginable ardour. He fent an embassy to the czar, in order to obtain his concurrence with the defire of the Livonians. The Russian prince was fo well fatisfied with the terms offered him by the king and the duke, that he consented to the election of the latter, who repaired to Moscow, where he was formally recognized king of Livonia, on his engaging to pay an annual acknowledgement to Russia, whose affistance he was, at the same time, empowered to claim against all enemies. This latter article was aimed at Sweden, whose troops and garrisons in Livonia were immediately

attacked by the combined forces of the Danes and Ruffians. John was foon convinced of his inability to oppose this confederacy: he determined, therefore, to revive the treaty, his refusal to ratify which had caused the renewal of the war. He behaved, however, with less pliancy than formerly, and yielded much less than was required by Frederick; who gained little more than what he was in possession of before the breaking out of this tedious and destructive war; which, in the end, proved almost equally detrimental to Den- 1570. mark and to Sweden.

The addition of Livonia to the dominions of the royal house of Denmark, had like to have been fatal to Frederick. Though his uncle was nominally fovereign, yet the czar still retained a proportion of authority that was very heavy and oppreffive to the inhabitants. Neither indeed did the Danes, who acted under the commission of Frederick and his uncle. conduct themselves with sufficient discretion. But, as it feldom happens that copartners in illegal power long agree; from ill-ufing the

with such violence, that it was expected they would at last have decided it in the field. Frederick, however, was made sensible how difficult it would be to meet the power of Russia, on equal terms, at such a distance from his kingdom. He therefore had recourse to a negociation with the czar; and wisely chose to make some concession to that prince, rather than

enter into a war with fo potent and foformidable an adversary.

But while the consciousness of necessity induced him to yield to the demands of Russia, he afferted the claims of his crown nearer home, in such a strain of authority as had never been exerted by any Danish monarch before Frederick. The passage through the Sound into the Baltic, had, for feveral ages, produced a confiderable revenue to the kings of Denmark. A prodigious increase of trade and navigation had refulted from the many maritime difcoveries and improvements which the enterprizing spirit of the times had been perpetually making fince the close of the fifteenth century. Denmark had reaped great profits by the far more numerous quantity of shipping that came from all parts of Europe into the Baltic. As its influence at fea was, in those days, much fuperiour to what it is at present, it was able to inforce, by dint of arms, the demands it thought proper to make on all ships that failed through the Sound.

Charles

Charles V. in the midst of his power, did not chuse to differ with Denmark on that point. He was always very zealous for the prosperity of his subjects of the feventeen provinces of the Netherlands. in that age the richest country in all Europe, and the fairest portion of his inheritance. He had his birth and education among them; and it is well known that he took particular pleasure in this part of his dominions, refiding there as often as his affairs would permit, and favouring the inhabitants more than any of his other subjects. Notwithstanding this predilection, he never attempted to claim an exemption in their behalf, from the toll exacted on their commercial vessels that passed through the Danish seas. The reafon was that Charles knew the marine of Denmark to be on a very respectable footing, and fully able to make good the pretensions of that monarchy. The utmost he did was to fettle the rates of payment, proportionably to the fize of ships, and to the value of their cargoes. This agreement, the terms of which were highly advan.

advantageous to Denmark, served as a precedent to the shipping of other nations, and was the means of bringing large sums into the Danish treasury.

When Frederick had terminated his long wars with Sweden to his fatisfaction. and had strengthened himself by an alliance with Russia, he began to consider in what manner he should now improve the domestic concerns of his realm. The protection and advancement of trade was the first object that occurred to him. Since the expulsion of Christian II. and the fettlement of the reformation in Denmark, there had been a confiderable augmentation of industry, and commercial bufiness throughout the kingdom, notwithflanding the diffurbances that had intervened relative to the succession to the crown; if, indeed, these very commotions were not favourable to commercial purfuits, by circulating, every where, a spirit of enterprize and activity. Frederick, in the course of his wars, had frequent occasions to be convinced of the utility of the trading part of his subjects. They Vol. I. K had

had often raised large sums for his service; and many of his successes were due to their timely affistance. In return, he always protected them with great readiness, and studied their interest with much zeal and fincerity. It was at their instigation, that he directed the building of ships for the purposes of war, much larger than any that had hitherto appeared in the North or indeed in any part of Europe. Hence he was enabled to affift the trade of his subjects in a very effectual manner, and to secure to them a superiority in the neighbouring feas that procured them a number of advantages in all their commercial transactions.

1583.

His maritime affairs were, at this time, in so flourishing a situation, that Frederick now thought himself in a capacity to execute a design he had long been meditating. This was to increase the duties payable for the passage of the Sound. He did not doubt of an opposition to such a measure; but he knew, at the same time, that he had least to apprehend from those who were to be most materially affected by

it. The people of the Netherlands, who, of all the Europeans, traded most largely to the Baltic, were involved in disputes with Spain, which put it absolutely out of their power to engage in any other quarrel.

This was fuch an opportunity as Frederick defired: he availed himself of it to lay additional taxes on their shipping, under various pretences. Other nations were treated in the same manner. Such a conduct gave occasion to remonstrances from the aggrieved parties; but Frederick paid little regard to them. England itself could not induce him to alter his measures. Its marine was not then sufficiently considerable to deter him from his purpose; and the vast projects that were forming against queen Elizabeth by Philip II. king of Spain, would not permit her to affert the dignity of her crown and kingdom, with her usual spirit and resolution.

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As to the hanseatic towns, they met with severer usage than any other states. As they were members of the Germanic

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body, they applied to the imperial court for redress; intimating thereby that Denmark was a dependance of the empire. But Frederick was so incensed at this proceeding, that he subjected all their shipping to the payment of double duties, as a penalty for the affront offered to his royal supremacy in his own dominions. The consequence was, that, in order to obtain a remission of this additional grievance, they were obliged to submit, in common with the rest, to the demands of Frederick.

In this manner did this politic prince improve all opportunities to his advantage. Nevertheless, he acted with so much prudence, and took such care to soften, by plausible arguments, the displeasure of those princes with whom he was desirous to preserve a good correspondence, that, notwithstanding this undue stretch of authority, he continued as highly respected as before; and did not lose any of the influence he had obtained: if it may not perhaps be affirmed, that this very action, unjust as it certainly was, did more to raise

raise him in the opinion of the political world, than his abstaining from it might possibly have done. The generality of princes and statesmen being more struck with the dexterity, than with the equitableness of each others proceedings, and shewing an invariable propensity to estimate men according to the success of their designs: as ready to praise the most unwarrantable when they succeed, as to blame the most praise worthy when they miscarry.

No Danish monarch ever met with more honourable proofs of the consideration he was held in abroad. His court was constantly filled with deputations from foreign states, especially from Germany, where he was looked upon as the principal protector of the Lutheran communion; against which many secret machinations were framing by the Romish party. Frederick very judiciously availed himself of the deference paid to him on so many accounts, to encrease and strengthen his influence. He had the satisfaction of seeing it so firmly and extensively established,

as to be deemed the umpire of the whole North; and to be consulted on affairs of the utmost importance, not only to Denmark, but to all his neighbours; most of whom testified, on frequent occasions, by their adherence to his countels, how much they valued his abilities.

He perfisted in this steadiness and fortitude of conduct to the last: and the close of his reign was marked by the same vigour and spirit as the beginning. reputation augmented, accordingly, with his years; and he was defervedly viewed in the light of one of the wifest monarchs in Europe. He received, in consequence, various tokens of the great personal respect that was borne him by foreign po-Elizabeth of England, who tentates. was certainly an able judge of merit, always mentioned him in terms full of esteem; and shewed of what importance she thought him, by fending him the Order of the Garter, accompanied with a splendid embassy: both of them proofs how high he stood in the opinion of this celebrated queen; who was equally an œcoeconomist in the dispensation of honours, and the management of her expences.

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Another proof of the rank he held in the judgment of the European nations, is that the ministry of Scotland, intent on marrying their young king in a manner suitable to his high expectations, cast their eyes on Frederick, as the most considerable of all the Protestant princes abroad; and the most worthy, for that reason, of a family alliance with a prince who was to be one of the greatest monarchs in the world.

The reign of Frederick II. may be accounted the most fortunate of any in the annals of Denmark, through the flourishing state of things at home, and the success that almost constantly attended the king's enterprizes abroad. The security enjoyed by his subjects, encouraged them to the prosecution of many useful undertakings; and they lived in a situation of domestic prosperity which had not a long time been experienced in Denmark. Frederick was never backward in promoting whatever tended to the public welfare.

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He was of a very generous disposition. and always willing to encourage and reward individuals of remarkable merit in whatever capacity they might excell. To this it was owing that he had excellent officers in his army and navy, both which were on as regular and respectable a footing as any at that time. He was no less fond of order and magnificence about his person; his court was the most splendid in all the North: neither should it be forgotten that he patronifed literature in a very liberal manner, bestowing confiderable fums for the advancement of curious and ufeful knowledge, and preferring many persons of ingenuity to places of honour and profit. To complete his happiness, he died in the full possession of the good will and attachment of his poople, and in the midst of a long settled tranquillity, that afforded the well founded prospect of a very considerable duration.

1588.

No king of Denmark ever ascended the throne with greater applause than Christian IV. The Danes had conceived a dea deep rooted affection for the house of Oldenburg; and, though at liberty to elect a king from what country and family they thought proper, so well were they satisfied with the administration of those princes, that they entertained no ideas of altering the succession in savour of any other line. Hence, though Christian was hardly out of his infancy, he was acknowledged and proclaimed king with the unanimous consent and joy both of the Danes and Norwegians.

At his accession to the crown. Denmark and its dependencies formed a very large and powerful state. Besides Denmark, properly fo called, confifting of the provinces that compose the great peninfula of Jutland, with the adjacent islands, he was master of the spacious and fertile countries of Schonen, Bleking, Halland and Bahus, lying on the fouthern and the western sides of Sweden, into which they opened an easy entrance in Together with all Nortime of war. way, he possessed the extensive province of Jemptland, fituated on the North of DaleDalecarlia, by which means he commanded a free passage into those parts of Sweden that lie on the Gulph of Bothnia.

The minority of Christian was attended with uninterrupted peace. Sweden was torn with intestine diffensions that prevented it from turning its attention abroad: Ruffia and Poland were in the fame condition; and from Germany Denmark had nothing to apprehend, as it counted among its furest friends all the Protestant princes in the empire. In this happy fituation Denmark remained upwards of twenty years, from the decease of Frederick II. During this fortunate period, the Danish nation had ample opportunities to make all manner of improvements at home, and to become rich and thriving. It was in this peaceable part of his reign that Christian employed his leifure in the cultivation of his mind. and in acquiring a variety of information both by fludy and travel. He made uncommon proficiency in whatever he undertook of this nature, and was univerfally

fally allowed to be as accomplished a prince as any in that age.

The first quarrel he was engaged in was 1609. with Charles IX. king of Sweden, who had dispossessed of the crown his nephew Sigismund, son of John, already mentioned. He was a bold and active prince, full of ambition, and eagerly desirous of regaining from Denmark what the misfortunes of the times had obliged his brother John to part with. His conduct relative to Christian was so presuming and offensive, that from reciprocal complaints they soon proceeded to hostilities.

Calmar was the first place where Christian essayed his arms. He besieged and took it after a vigorous desence; but his generals were not so successful. They were attacked by Charles and deseated. Christian, however, soon repaired this loss by various advantages both on sea and land. The Swedish monarch, who had hitherto met with a constant course of prosperity, throughout his whole life, was so affected by this reverse of fortune, that he lost all temper. His resentment was such, that

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he fent a challenge to Christian, defying him in the most furious language to a single combat. Christian, whose personal courage was unquestionable, treated the behaviour of Charles with the utmost scorn. He gave him to understand that his conduct was dictated by want of fortitude to bear disappointments, and not by the spirit that ought to govern a king. Charles, whose health had already been long declining, was so chagrined at the stille of superiority which the Danish monarch used on this occasion, that it seemed to add to his illness, and he died shortly after, leaving the crown to his son.

This new rival to Christian was Gustavus Adolphus: a prince born to fix the destiny of states and kingdoms, and to change the face of Europe. The very first beginnings of this hero soon convinced Christian that he had to deal with a much more formidable enemy than before. He retook from the Danes all they had won from his father, and had not the designs of Russia called the chief of his attention elsewhere, he would, in all probability, have

have reduced the Danes to great extremities. Christian availed himself of this diversion to carry on the war upon more equal terms. It was at length concluded 1613. by the interpolition of James I. king of England, his brother-in-law. But the conditions were no longer dicated by Denmark with that loftiness it had asfumed in the reign of Frederick II. Sweden was now on quite another footing: and it was owing to the moderation of Gustavus that an honourable peace was granted to Denmark.

In order to defray the charges of his war with Sweden, Christian had, according to a very unjust and impolitic precedent, raifed the duties imposed on the shipping that passed through the Sound. The Dutch, who were the principal fufferers, made very spirited remonstrances against this measure, and demanded immediate redrefs. They had now emerged from the difficulties that had furrounded them at their first throwing off the yoke of Spain, and their marine was become fo powerful, that it was not to be expected they would

would submit to the pleasure of the Danish court, as they had done formerly.

Spain was glad of this altercation between them and a prince who was yet considered as the first potentate in the North. It hoped, by somenting the quarrel, to be able to chastise and reduce those rebellious subjects as it styled them. With this view the Spanish emissaries found means to exasperate Christian against them to such a degree, that he concluded a treaty with Philip III. then on the throne of Spain; whereby they mutually agreed to proceed to open hostilities against the Dutch.

But these were so far from being dismayed, that they sent Christian a very resolute notification of their intent to persist in their demands, and to affert them, if necessary, by force of arms, if exposulations proved ineffectual. The hanse towns joined themselves to the Dutch on this emergency; and the naval preparations made by both, especially the latter, appeared so formidable, that Christian altered his determinations, and consented to settle the matter

matter amicably, by relaxing from his former requifitions.

He had too much wisdom to engage in a contest with a people from whom so much more might be gained through peace than war; and he did not chuse to give any interruption to the many commercial pursuits his own people were now employed in. These might have suffered greatly from the obstructions that would have undoubtedly been thrown in their way by a nation whose navigation extended to every quarter of the globe, and whose power at fea was increased to such a height, that it was become a terror to its former sovereigns, the kings of Spain, not only in their American and Afiatic dominions, but even on their own coasts in Europe, and in the very fight of their own harbours.

Delivered from the danger into which this altercation with Holland had thrown him, Christian was now at liberty to resume the schemes he had in view for the aggrandizement of his power, and the enriching of his dominions. For this pur-

pose he instituted an East India Company, in imitation of those which had been established in England and in Holland. He opened also an asylum in his kingdom to the Protestants of Germany, violently persecuted by the bigotry of the house of Austria. He took no less care to avail himself of the unhappy disputes that were raging in the United Provinces, between the Gomarists and the Arminians. He afforded these latter, who were the weaker party, a very beneficial refuge. He affigned them the city of Glucstad for their residence. Through their industry it soon became a place of great commercial importance. In this manner did Christian employ the peace he now enjoyed. He was amply rewarded for his cares; in the course of a few years he had the satisfaction of feeing his country become prodigiously flourishing.

While he was thus busied in domestic improvements, his Swedish neighbour, Gustavus Adolphus, was immersed in martial toils and enterprizes of all kinds, and laying the soundation of that military

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knowledge which enabled him afterwards to triumph over the greatest commanders of the age, and rendered him, confessedly, as great a general as the world had ever produced. He was, at this time, particularly, waging a most sierce and bloody war against the Poles.

He was not, however, so taken up with his exploits, as to forget the civil duties of his station. No Swedish monarch was ever more attentive to the internal government of his kingdom, or better knew the happy confequences of fuch an attention. He was the more incited to act in this manner, from feeing the fortunate refults of it in the prosperity attending the conduct of Christian, by whom he was resolved to be outdone in nothing that was praise-worthy. He had the fense and penetration to discern all that was proper and judicious in the proceedings of the Danish monarch; and he had, at the same time, too much greatness of mind to difown his merit, of which he had wirneffed fufficient instances, both in the field, and VOL. I. in

in a variety of other transactions of the highest difficulty and importance.

Influenced by these motives, he was very folicitous to live on friendly terms with a prince whom he juftly confidered as a most formidable rival, able to create him more obstacles than any of his other neighbours. He, therefore, laboured with the utmost warmth to secure the duration of the peace he had concluded with him. In order to convince him how truly defirous he was of this measure, he demanded an interview, at which he made use of all his abilities and eloquence to perfuade him to remain firmly on an amicable footing. As a proof of his earnestness, he made several important concessions. Neither was Christian wanting in suitable returns, and they parted equally fatisfied with each other.

This was an event highly honourable to the character of Christian. It shewed in what a light he was beheld by Gustavus, who was not a prince easily prevailed upon to make advances of this na-

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ture; and who, though governed by the noblest principles of equity and moderation, cherished high notions of honour, and would never have been the first in making overtures to Christian, unless he had been sensible of his extraordinary courage and capacity, and that it was absolutely necessary to secure his friendship, in order to execute the various designs he was meditating.

The reputation of Christian was, indeed, risen to such a height, that the eyes of all the Protestant part of Europe were upon him, as a prince entirely fit to head the opposition that was secretly preparing against the exorbitant incroachments of the house of Austria; which, in defiance of laws and treaties, had through divers unwarrantable pretences, gradually invaded the most facred rights of the Germanic body, and exercised an equally absolute and cruel fway throughout all Germany. In consequence of the great opinion entertained of Christian, he was intrusted with the supreme management of affairs, by the confederacy formed among the 1621.

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Protestant princes and states of the empire. These were encouraged and assisted by the arms and money of Holland and England, both deeply interested in maintaining the Protestant cause, and in preserving the liberties of Germany.

The first design of this confederacy, was to restore the unhappy elector Palatine to the possessions of his family. The primary step taken for this purpose, was to set on foot a negociation with the emperor, in order to prevail upon him to recall the edict issued against that prince, by which he had been declared a rebel, and his electorate confiscated. But the imperial court, elated with a long series of prosperity, received the proposal with a pride and haughtiness that shewed the confederates how little they had to expect from applications of this nature.

After a long and tedious tryal of what could be effected by entreaties and remonstrances, it became evident that nothing but open force would bring the Austrian ministry to alter its measures. An army was accordingly levied; the command of

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pared, at last, to act offensively. The 1625. beginning of his operations was successful, and he gained several advantages over the famous count Tilly, one of the bravest and most skilful generals of the age. But his good fortune did not last; the no less celebrated Walstein having reinforced Tilly with a very numerous body, they compelled Christian, in his turn, to act upon the defensive.

This he was the more readily inclined to do, as most of his troops were new levies; while, on the contrary, the imperial army was wholly composed of veterans, long inured to war and slushed with victory. This motive prevented him from carrying on hostilities with that fire and impetuosity which had hitherto accompanied all his undertakings. But it afforded him, on the other hand, a variety of opportunities to display his military genius, by the sagacious disposition of his forces, and by the judiciousness of the various motions he was continually obliged to make, in order to avoid coming to a decisive en-

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gagement with an enemy so incomparably his superiour in the number and goodness of his troops.

1626.

The next campaign was conducted on the same plan. He was aided by the renowned Mansfelt, a man whose genius and intrepidity had long been the chief, and often the fole support of the common cause of Germany, against the house of Austria. But the multitude of excellent officers in the Austrian service was too heavy a weight to be refisted. Mansfelt, in spite of his conduct, was forced to give battle to Walstein, who overpowered and defeated him. Christian, notwithstanding all the skill and circumspection he used, in order to prevent it, was obliged, in like manner, to come to an engagement with count Tilly, who gained a complete victory over him.

But, though Christian lost this fatal battle, he distinguished himself during the action by every proof of coolness and courage that became a great commander. He made every effort that valour and experience could suggest. But the fortune

of Tilly, seconded by superiour numbers and discipline, prevailed at last. After a brave and bloody refistance, the confederate army was totally routed, and almost the whole of it taken or cut in pieces. In the midst of this terrible disaster, Christian did not lose that presence of mind which had so remarkably attended him during these two unfortunate campaigns. Surrounded on every fide by a victorious enemy, he found means, at the head of what remained of his horse, and after the entire loss of his foot and artillery, to effect a retreat through every obstacle that could be contrived by a vigilant and active conqueror, enraged at his escape. and conscious that in preventing it, he would at once put an end to the war by an action that would leave no further addition to his glory.

Christian, though conquered, was not dismayed. He had proved to the world the extent of his abilities, by facing so long, with inexperienced troops, such veteran armies and such consummate generals as Tilly and Walstein, who were

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inferiour to none but Gustavus Adolphus himself. But the affairs of the league over which he had been chosen to preside, were, by this last defeat, thrown into such consusion that no hopes remained of retrieving them. The imperial armies, dispersed over the whole face of the allied countries, carried horror and desolation every where. Christian, unable to oppose them, was constrained to retire into his dominions. But he was followed by Tilly and Walstein, whose united strength was now become irresistible; and who made themselves masters of the whole duchy of Holstein.

These missortunes were aggravated by the death of the brave Mansselt, whom Christian justly called his right arm, and on whom chiefly depended all his hopes in Germany. Still, however, he retained his firmness, and prepared, with unabated courage and alacrity, to meet the two formidable adversaries that had invaded his dominions. But he was not able to infuse the same degree of spirit that animated him into the souls of his country-

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men. The Danish diet was frightened at the terrible armies that were cantoned all over Holstein, ready to enter Jutland, and to seize on all that belonged to Denmark, on the continent. They represented to Christian the dangerous situation the realm was in, and that it was impossible to oppose any longer the imperial power.

To complete the mortification of Christian, after collecting his forces, and leading them to the enemy, a panic terror seized them, on the approach of Tilly, and they deserted in such numbers that he was left in a quite defenceles fituation. In this distress the states of Denmark took upon them to interpose between their king and the emperor, whose favour they implored in terms that shewed too much of dejectedness and despondency. imperial ministry acted with its usual haughtiness and arrogance on this occasion, and made the Danes fully fensible that they had only degraded themselves by this fruitless and humiliating application.

But Christian, who well knew that supplications and intreaties availed nothing 1628.

at that inexorable court, refumed his military operations with invincible ardour. He prest his allies to exert themselves with all vigour and speed; he convinced them of the necessity of acting with more unanimity and spirit than ever. He shewed them the example, by attacking the enemy in feveral places with fuccefs. This revived the courage of his foldiers, who made some very resolute stands against the imperialists, particularly at Glucstad which these had besieged, but where they met with fo warm a reception that they were compelled to withdraw, after fuftaining a very heavy loss. Animated by this return of fortune, Christian, at the head of a chosen body of troops, penetrated again into Germany. He fell upon Pomerania, and took some places of note. But this prosperity was transitory; the Austrian forces soon attacked him in larger numbers; and, notwithstanding a very long and desperate resistance, he was again worsted with the loss of what he had taken from the enemy in the preceding part of the campaign.

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Christian, however, without losing courage, continued to oppose his adversaries with his usual activity. He convinced them, by the unceasing efforts he made on every fide, that, notwithstanding their superiority of strength, and even of success, they would find it a hard task to bring him to submit to the conditions which they had flattered themselves to impose upon him. Though reduced to great difficulties, Christian had a fertility of invention that always supplied him with refources. Neither was he ignorant that many of those who appeared so warm in the cause of Austria, began to dread the rapid increase of power in that ambitious house. Relying on this knowledge of the real circumstances of his enemy, he preferved a fortitude in his conduct that induced the imperial party to request their chief to offer terms of accommodation to the king of Denmark and the princes in his alliance. The emperor, who imagined he should dictate what articles he pleased, readily consented to a negociation.

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This negociation was fixed at Lubec, where commissioners met from both parties. But the demands of the imperial court proved, as was expected, fo arrogant and excessive, that Christian's ministers, directed by the spirit of their master, refused to subscribe to them. Christian himself wrote to the various members of the Protestant league, in a stile full of resolution and firmness; proffering with a truly royal magnanimity, to run all hazards in conjunction with them rather than submit to the requisitions of the enemy. The resolute demeanour of the Danish monarch and his commissioners did equal honour and service to the cause. The fevere conditions at first infisted upon by the imperial ministers, were greatly mitigated; and, though the treaty was, on the whole, highly advantageous to the house of Austria, yet, considering the profperous career of its arms, and the prodigious augmentation of its strength and power from that cause, Christian may be faid to have concluded no dishonourable peace,

peace, as whatever had been taken from 1629.

But, notwithstanding the fecurity refulting from it to his Danish dominions. the terrible ravages and devastations committed by the imperial armies, had reduced them to fuch a melancholy condition, that all the fruits of the long tranquillity that had preceded this war, had been wholly loft in those provinces where Christian had particularly exerted himself in promoting commerce, and other improvements. In order to repair these calamities, he granted various privileges to fuch as interested themselves in restoring and forwarding the fettlements he had founded for those purposes; and laid a tax for their benefit on the shipping that entered the Elbe, at the mouth of which they were fituated.

This was an error which, though probably committed through mistake, involved Christian in a fresh dispute. The 1630. rich and powerful city of Hamburgh lay in the vicinity of these new establishments. The regency could not fail to look upon them them with a jealous eye, as they necesfarily tended to injure its commerce. But, though they stifled their discontents at this disagreeable undertaking, they could contain them no longer when Christian asfumed the right of levying duties on the vessels bound to Hamburg. This was represented as an act of sovereignty to which Christian had no right, and the exercise of which was a manifest invasion of the liberties of that city.

But Christian, like many of his predeceffors, had no intention of acknowledging, in any manner, the absolute independence of Hamburg. He infifted, in a peremptory style, on the justice and propriety of what he had done; and afferted his supremacy over that city in very strong and positive terms. From reciprocal complaints the matter proceeded to open violence; and, notwithstanding the interpolition of feveral of the hanse towns, Christian resolved, as he expressed it, to chastife the insolence of the Hamburgers in person. To this purpose he fitted out a very formidable fleet, with which he failed

failed immediately to the entrance of the Elbe. Here he engaged the fleet of that city; and, after a very severe conflict, forced it to retire with much damage, further up into that river. He pursued his success with great vigour and expedition. He landed a considerable body of forces, and was preparing to attack Hamburg itself in form, when he was diverted from his design by the concurrence of divers circumstances, which engaged him to alter his measures, and turn his attention elsewhere.

Gustavus Adolphus had entered Germany. This great conqueror had made so rapid and unexpected a progress, that he was now universally looked upon as the hero destined to curb the ambition of the house of Austria, and to restore the freedom of the empire, together with the rights of the Protestant party; both which had been equally invaded and trampled under foot by the repeated usurpations and cruelties of that tyrannical and bigotted family. The astonishing successes of the Swedish monarch had revived the hopes

and spirit of the league that had been so unfortunate under the guidance of Christian. The princes and states that composed it, resolved again to try their fate under the new leader that fortune seemed to have fent to their affiftance. They, accordingly, affembled at Hamburg, at the time when the dispute fell out between this city and the king of Denmark. This monarch, possibly, was not forry to find fo plaufible a pretence to plead for dropping an enterprize from which, in all appearance, he would have derived very little profit or honour. He, therefore, took the seasonable occasion of the presence of his old allies to cease all hostilities, and, partly through their intervention, the difference was composed for the present, and himself induced to countenance the purposes of their meeting.

professed by Christian in favour of a cause for which he had been so great a sufferer, still he was tormented by the remembrance that he had once been at the head of it;

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that through his ill success it had been ruined, and that another more able and more successful director was now substituted in his stead. His pride was so deeply stung by these reslections, that it was plain the glory that surrounded the Swedish monarch was a sore mortification to Christian, notwithstanding that hero was avenging the common cause of all the Protestants against their capital enemy.

Certain it is the greatest slaw in the character of Christian, was the envy he bore that illustrious prince. It led him into several steps, which, had they succeeded, might have deseated the noble plan concerted by that great king, who was equally a statesman and a warrior, and proposed nothing wherein he had not with him the wishes of the wise and the honest part of all Europe.

The partifans of the house of Austria were too keen sighted not to perceive and avail themselves of this envious disposition in Christian. They somented it by all those despicable, but effectual artistices that are so well understood, and so commonly

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practifed, in courts. They carried their point so far that Christian began to forget the natural and political ties that connected him, if not with Gustavus himfelf, at least with that cause he was so gloriously supporting. The Spanish and Austrian emissaries found means to fow the most violent suspicions of the danger that might accrue to him, from the aggrandizement of fo near and perpetual a rival as the king of Sweden. They represented his designs as no ways compatible with the fafety of Denmark. They wrought, at length, so powerfully on the mind of Christian, that Gustavus himself was alarmed at the change that was perceivable in the politics and inclinations of that prince.

In order to fix him decifively on their fide, the Austrian ministry proposed to give him the sequestration of several confiderable districts in those parts of Germany that lay contiguous to his dominions. This was a temptation which the ambitious spirit of Christian knew not how to resist. In the midst of those paffions

fions which emulation and fear excited in his mind, he had, however, the difcretion to forbear entering on fo arduous and important a business, before he had taken the fense of his own people on the case in question. To this intent he summoned a national diet, where the subject was deliberated on with all freedom and candour. The refult was, that he was most earnestly advised and intreated to abstain from acting an hostile part against Gustavus, and to beware of endangering himself and his country, by espousing the interest of Austria; which had no other view in its offers than to facrifice him to its own purposes.

Christian, though a prince of a very warm and lofty temper, had still a reserve of coolness and judgment that enabled him to restrain his impetuosity, and to correct quickly the errors into which hastiness sometimes betrayed him. Happily for his subjects, he became sensible of the precipitateness of his conduct; and determined to rectify it without delay, by renouncing the schemes he had been M 2 tempted.

tempted to form in favour of the imperial court, and by renewing the friendship that subsisted between Denmark and Sweden

When this behaviour of Christian is duly attended to, it ought to be confessed that he derived more honour by refraining from an indulgence of his inclinations, when convinced of their evil tendency, than if he had never had them to contend with. It shewed him a man endued with a great foul; fince nothing is more difficult than to suppress the emotions of a violent and erroneous emulation, and to make them give way, for the common good, to the advancement of a rival's glory.

The manifestation of Christian's favourable disposition to the imperial court, had, however, a very ill consequence. It justly raised the suspicions of Gustavus; who, never from that hour, would place any confidence in Christian, notwithstanding the frequent affurances given him by the latter of his friendship and good wishes. To this it was owing that he accepted,

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with fuch affected coldness, the mediation of the Danish monarch, whom, indeed, it had been weakness in him to trust, after the flagrant proofs he had displayed of his partiality for the house of Austria.

Nor can it be dissembled that the moderation and forbearance of Christian were. in a great measure, dictated by the dread of Gustavus; who was, in a manner, reputed invincible, and who, in the torrent of his endless victories, was now threatening to overwhelm the house of Austria in universal ruin. While this terrible warrior lived, Christian did not deviate from the neutrality he professed. But, when the unexpected death of this dreaded 1632. prince had eafed him of his fears, he began openly to resume the designs he had entertained before that event.

The duchy of Bremen had already been held out as a bait to his ambition on a preceding occasion: it now again excited him to move afresh; he seized the opportunity of the remarkable defeat of the Swedish army at Nordlingen; his intention was to 1634. secure that country, and to put his son

Frederick in possession of it, under colour of administering the government and revenues in those times of general rapine and confusion. Still, however, the fortune of Sweden survived its monarch. Notwithstanding the loss of that fatal battle, the Swedish generals continued to act with the utmost conduct and resolution; and while Christian was full of this project, the imperialists received so complete and signal an overthrow, that he did not think proper to attempt the carrying of it into execution.

1637.

1636.

In default of this scheme, another was shortly after laid before Christian, of a most extraordinary nature; but which his rooted aversion to Sweden engaged him to undertake, contrary to all the rules of prudence and probability. The court of Spain had long endeavoured to persuade Christian to embrace its cause, by every motive that could prevail upon a prince who thirsted after the humiliation of two powers for whom it entertained an equal inveteracy. Sweden was undoubtedly the chief object of Christian's hatred; but the

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republic of Holland was hardly less odious to that prince, on account of the spirited manner in which it had refisted his various attempts to load its trade in the Baltic, by raising the duties payable by its vessels that failed through the Sound. There were also other motives for his antipathy to the Dutch: they had remained stedfast in their alliance with Gustavus; and had been particularly instrumental in putting the Swedish marine on a good footing: they had, at all times, shewn the utmost readiness to support the hanse towns in their complaints against Denmark: they had, in short, expressed, on feveral occasions, an alacrity in thwarting the politics of Christian, which had irritated him to fuch a degree, that he could hardly bear to hear them mentioned; and often betrayed an aversion and impatience on their account, that was rather unkingly, and beneath the majesty of his character. It was not furprizing, therefore, that he gave ear to a project that tended to promote the defire he so ardently entertained of ruining the M 4 two two states which he had so long considered as his capital enemies.

The plan proposed by Spain, and adopted by Christian, was first to attack and conquer Sweden; after which they concluded it would be no difficult matter totally to exclude the Dutch from the Baltic: by this means the latter would entirely be cut off from all resources for the building and equipping of their fleets, and would, of necessary consequence, be deprived of their commerce and maritime strength; which would, in a short time, reduce them to a state of the utmost debility, and oblige them to submit to their old masters.

The court of Spain was no less earnest in this matter than the Danish monarch. It was governed, at that time, by a minister who had hitherto acquitted himself of his charge in a manner that shewed him a man of abilities. This was the famous Olivares, who continued so long the favourite and the supreme director of Philip IV. king of Spain; who, from the beginning of his reign had placed his whole

whole confidence in him, and had left him the supreme and uncontroulable manager of all affairs throughout his extensive dominions. Olivares resembled Christian in several respects; like him he was enterprizing, and obstinately tenacious in persisting, against all difficulties, in the protecution of what he had once undertaken: he was no less warm in forming vast projects, and sanguine in his expectations of success. To this satal turn of mind were, in a great measure, owing the many calamities brought on the respective monarchies they governed.

In order to carry into immediate execution the immense design they had conceived, they exerted themselves in the most vigorous manner their affairs would permit. Notwithstanding the weak state of the Spanish marine, Olivares made such prodigious efforts, that a sleet was set forth that astonished all Europe; which had long imagined that Spain was totally unable to make so formidable a sigure on the ocean. The states of Holland were particularly alarmed; and lost no time in putting

putting themselves in a posture of defence: dreading, not without reason, that this powerful armament was intended against them. They knew nothing of its real destination; which was to join the whole naval power of Denmark and proceed directly to Stockholm. On board the Spanish fleet were embarked the choicest troops in that kingdom. Such was the opinion entertained of Olivares, by his fovereign, and by his countrymen, that no expence was spared to encourage the bravest and most expert mariners, and land officers to ferve in this expedition; and that numbers of the very flower of the Spanish nobility and gentry were zealous in offering themselves as volunteers on this important occasion.

This mighty fleet failed, at last, under the command of the duke of Oquendo, an officer of bravery and experience; but far inferiour on the element on which he was now commissioned to act, to the antagonist he was about to encounter. This was the celebrated Van Tromp; as great a commander at sea as ever Holland or any country could boast: he had already rendered himself samous by a multitude of gallant actions; and was, with great reason, selected to defend the honour and safety of his country on this critical emergency. They were both equally at stake; and the eyes of all Europe were as much sixed on the motions of Spain, as they had been half a century before, when its monarch Philip II. attempted the invasion of England.

The meeting of those two formidable 1639. sheets was precisely in those very seas that proved so fatal, at that time, to the Spanish armada. The same sate was again renewed: out of near seventy ships of war, only eight escaped: all the rest, without exception, were either taken or destroyed by the Dutch; who never before, nor since, obtained so complete and glorious a victory at sea. What happened in the days of Elizabeth now happened again: the mighty expectations of the Spaniards vanished at once, and their designs were immediately dropt, without the least hope of their being ever able to

resume them. From this epocha may be dated the total ruin of the maritime power of Spain under the princes of the Austrian line: it remained in a state of the utmost weakness and contempt, till the ministry of cardinal Alberoni; which did not take place till after the wars for the succession to that crown were over, and the Bourbon family thoroughly settled on the throne.

In the mean time Christian was making immense preparations to second the Spaniards; proposing, on their arrival, to attack Sweden both by sea and land. He augmented his fleet and army, and was waiting for them with the utmost impatience, when he received the news of their defeat. This overthrew the whole scheme he had been at such pains to forward, and he now began to entertain thoughts of peace. But the Swedish miniftry had received intelligence of the pernicious defigns he had been harbouring against them, and resolved to take the most fignal vengeance. They conducted themselves with the profoundest secrecy.

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Christian, imagining they knew nothing of his confederacy with Spain, was preparing to adjust matters amicably; and had, for that purpose, dispatched commissaries to the congress appointed at Ofnabrug, to treat of a general pacification between the powers at war. The Swedes feized this opportunity to invade the 1643. duchy of Holstein; the duke being, at that time, closely connected with Denmark.

This expedition was headed by Torstenson, a general bred under Gustavus Adolphus, and a disciple worthy of so great a master. The Danes were not able to oppose the Swedes commanded by such an officer. He made himself master of the whole country, and penetrated into Jutland. On the Swedish side of the Danish dominions, the war was carried on with equal vigour by Sweden. The celebrated Horn, another pupil of Gustavus, made an irruption into Schonen; where 1644. the fuddenness of his attack reduced the Danes to the greatest difficulties.

In the midst of these unexpected losses, Christian preserved the most unshaken He gave his orders and difortitude. rections for the relief of the various places attacked by the Swedes, with the utmost coolness and presence of mind; and contributed, by the propriety of his difpofitions, to stop the progress of the enemy, more than any man in his dominions. Notwithstanding the dangerous situation of his affairs, he conceived a defign full of that magnanimity which had always characterised him on difficult emergencies: he refolved, in person, to carry the war into Sweden itself.

Leaving the center of his kingdom provided with all necessaries for a vigorous defence, he sailed with a powerful sleet to Gottenburg, the second city of Sweden for wealth, commerce, and importance. It had been sounded by Charles IX. sather of the great Gustavus Adolphus, during the first years of Christian's reign; who often used to say that as he had beheld its infancy, so he hoped to see its latter end. He attacked it, accordingly, with great

resolution, and with such a likelihood of success, that Horn was obliged to abandon the design of reducing Schonen, and to hasten with all speed to succour Gottenburg.

But, in spite of the bravery and experience of this officer, Christian would have succeeded in his attempt on that city, if the Dutch had not dispatched a very confiderable squadron to its affistance. It arrived in time to frustrate the expectations of the Danish monarch, who was, in his turn, obliged to act on the defensive. This he did with fo much activity and vigilance, that the Swedes, notwithstanding the help of their Dutch allies, were not able to effect any of the enterprizes they had projected on the principal Danish islands. On the contrary, Christian, at the head of his fleet, went in quest of that of Sweden. He came up with it, and engaged it with the noblest intrepidity. Never was Christian before in such imminent danger of his life: a musket shot wounded him in the eye, and a cannon ball grazed his head: but he remained

mained on deck, and continued the fight, which ended to his advantage. The enemy having retired into harbour, Christian blocked him up, and landed a body of troops that entrenched themselves on a mountain that commanded the harbour. Here they planted a battery that did considerable execution on the Swedish fleet: but the chief loss was that of its admiral, Fleming, the best sea-officer in Sweden, and in high repute with the great Gustavus.

But, notwithstanding these advantages, and some others by land, still the general fortune of the war was against Denmark. Frederick, son to Christian, met with very ill success in the duchy of Bremen, where he was defeated by Koningsmark, a Swedish general of great note. The succours sent by the emperor effected nothing in Jutland, from whence they were driven by the superior generalship of Torstenson.

In the mean time the Dutch and Swedish fleets made a junction which rendered them far superiour to the Danes. They failed,

failed, in consequence, in search of them. Unhappily for the Danes their naval forces were separated. The whole united force of the enemy fell in with a Danish squadron; which, though of considerable firength, was far inferiour to theirs. They furrounded and attacked it on every fide. The Danes made a very brave and refolute defence; but were, at length, obliged to yield to superiority of numbers. Of the whole squadron, consisting of seventeen vessels, only two escaped. This victory was purchased very dear. The allied fleet was fo shattered that it was forced to lve by a long space in order to refit. This, together with the approach of winter, prevented it from improving fo great an advantage, and afforded time to Chriftian to recover himself in some measure.

He exerted himself with the utmost speed and application to put all places in a condition to meet the attacks of the victorious enemy. But, notwithstanding all his efforts, he foon found that peace alone was the measure that could save him. Sweden had, on the return of the en-Vol. I.

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1645. fuing spring, put to sea a very formidable navy. The Dutch were on the point of joining the Swedes with a sleet of sifty sail. Denmark had hardly thirty ships to resist the weight of both those powers. These considerations induced the Danish monarch to hearken to the offers of mediation made by France; which was defirous of an accommodation between the two Northern powers, that Sweden might be at greater liberty to pursue the war against the emperor, whose humiliation the French were not less eagerly prosecuting.

1645.

Peace was at last concluded: but upon such terms as greatly mortified the losty mind of Christian. This monarch, who was now verging towards seventy, still retained the whole fire and impetuosity of his youth. No enterprize of whatever nature could daunt him, or abate the activity of his disposition. It was with much grief that he saw himself compelled to check his martial ardour, and give way to the necessity of preserving his kingdom from utter ruin. Nothing but this motive could have

have prevailed upon him to subscribe to the conditions imposed upon him; and by which he ceded to Sweden the provinces of Halland, Jempterland, and Herndalen. They were all three large and The fituation of the first confiderable. was particularly advantageous for commerce, lying along the Western shore of Sweden, and connecting the Danish posfessions on the North of the Baltic with the kingdom of Norway. But the most disagreeable cession was that of the Isle of Gothland, in the center of the Baltic, and commanding the navigation of that fea. It had fallen into the possession of Denmark during the reign of the famous Margaret of Waldemar; and had remained in the hands of the Danes ever fince, in spite of the many attempts of Sweden to recover it. All these were trying circumstances to a prince of Christian's high spirit; and were the more aggravating, when he recollected that he had undertaken this last war with the fairest prospect of success, from the embarraffed fituation of the Swedish affairs.

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The confideration of his misfortunes embittered greatly the remainder of his life. He could not but recall to his mind the flourishing state of Denmark at his accession to the crown: the power it exercifed in the Baltic Sea, and the influence it possessed over its neighbours. He had once feen the whole trade of Europe thro' the Sound, regulated by Danish laws; and remembered the time when Sweden was indisputably an inferiour kingdom to his own. But he had now lived to fee prodigious alterations. The Dutch, whom he was able formerly to controul, were now become an equally inveterate and dangerous enemy. Sweden, over which Denmark had been so long used to domineer, he now beheld risen to a most alarming superiority. Instead of remaining on the defensive, as of old, and suffering their country to become perpetually the feat of hostilities and devastations, he had feen the Swedes carry their victorious arms into the heart of his dominions, and bereave him of the better half of the kingdom of Denmark.

He was now full of the conviction how necessary it was to preserve tranquillity, in order to heal the wounds of his country; and he determined that no motive whatever should draw him into any farther altercation, till the condition of the realm enabled him to hope for better fortune. This, however, his great age prevented him from indulging the expectation of ever seeing; and all he could do was to set the example of labouring with all possible assiduity to repair past calamities.

He continued till his death in this fa- 1648. Intary work, which he profecuted with all imaginable diligence, notwithstanding the burthen of years; keen and vigilant as in the vigour of his life; losing no opportunity of settling all affairs to the utmost advantage, and heartily desirous of leaving every thing in as good condition as circumstances would permit.

Such was the reign of Christian IV. To sum up the character of this celebrated prince, it may be said, that though far from indebted to any peculiar smiles of fortune, yet he was one of the most de-

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ferving potentates in his time. His whole reign, which was the longest in the Danish history, offers an almost uninterrupted chain of important transactions. Many were the undertakings he projected and patronised for the prosperity of his country: many were the councils and determinations he engaged in for the honour of his crown: whatever could conduce to these purposes was ever uppermost in his mind. Notwithstanding his reign was marked with many unprosperous events, yet his character stood the test of ill fortune, and always shone superiour to adversity: unmoved and stedfast in the purfuit of what he thought was proper and worthy of him, he behaved to the last with invincible spirit and vigour, died with the reputation annexed those who fill their station with dignity.

Denmark, for a long time, flourished remarkably under his administration; and though he might, on the whole, be accounted rather unfortunate in his enterprizes abroad, yet his people were equitable enough to distinguish between the

propriety of the plans he entered upon, and the ill success that might attend them; well knowing that whenever he failed, it was seldom for want of having acted with the judgment and precaution sufficient to have deserved better fortune.

In consequence of the good opinion his subjects universally entertained of him, he never found them backward in concurring with, and forwarding all his defigns to the utmost of their power. His demands from the states were respectfully complied with; and not only the taxes imposed by the public authority were chearfully paid, but whenever any fudden exigence arose, he was always fure of instantly meeting with the most cordial and ready supplies from every rank and condition; each town and corporation shewing the utmost alacrity, and advancing for his fervice as confiderable fums as they were able to raife.

As a return for these continual proofs of loyalty and affection, no Danish monarch ever strove with more zeal to deferve them. Bounded by the laws in the

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extent and execution of his power, he never aimed at rescinding any which he deemed beneficial to the community; and his influence, though great, was never employed for any purposes of oppression. The only use he made of the ascendancy he possessed over the minds of his people, was to induce the profecution of fuch measures as tended, in his opinion, to promote their interest or their glory. No fovereign ever did more to animate his subjects by the force of his own example. He chearfully bore an ample share of every burden in common with them, and was ever forward in exposing his person to all manner of toils and dangers.

By persevering invariably in this conduct he acquired a name which is held in the highest veneration by the Danes, who seem unanimously inclined to preser him to any of his successors, as uniting, in a much more conspicuous degree, the virtues of a good king with the qualifications of a hero. He remains, in short, the favourite object of their remembrance;

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and is mentioned as a prince whose example is highly worthy of imitation by fuch of his rank as wish to merit the unfeigned attachment of their subjects.

Such is the picture of Christian IV. as drawn by the generality of people in Denmark. Neither, on the whole, is it any misrepresentation of that prince, whose character, allowing for some defects and frailties, often incident to the best dispofitions, was altogether truly noble and heroic. Though it must be confessed, at the fame time, that what greatly conduces to render his memory fo precious in that country, is the recollection that he was the last king under whom it enjoyed a constitutional freedom.

It may not be amiss to add that Christian IV. entertained a particular esteem for the British nation. Possibly his alliance with James I. who was his cotemporary, and had married his fifter, might have proved the first incentive to this predilection. There were, however, other foundations for a prince of his superior

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discernment to build his regard upon. The knowledge and information he was master of, doubtless led him to think advantageously of a people whose capacity and courage had been improved and exerted, under the guidance of queen Elizabeth, to a degree that had roused the attention and the wonder of all Europe. It was not furprifing, therefore, that Christian should so readily seize the occasion of his relationship to James, for whom he cherished, at the same time, a fincere affection, to visit a country whose inhabitants were become so famous: he thereby fatisfied a laudable curiofity; and did considerable honour to this nation, as the notice taken of a people by such men, is a proof of no common merit.

Frederick III. succeeded to the throne of Denmark at a time when the utmost abilities were needed to remedy the misfortunes occasioned by the late terrible war. He had quite a new career of politics to enter upon abroad, and the dignity of his crown to maintain at home;

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both of them objects of equal difficulty and importance.

The Danish nobility were become fo potent, and, at the same time, so factious, that, on the decease of Christian, they had entertained a defign of putting the scepter into the hands of count Waldemar, the natural fon of that monarch: intending thereby to fecure the supreme authority to themselves, through the dependance to which the want of their support would of necessity subject him. Though Frederick frustrated their intention, yet he found the weight of their power very heavy, and longed for an opportunity to shake it off. This naturally induced him to labour with all his might to ingratiate himself with the generality of his people; and herein he succeeded to the fullest of his wishes. He made himfelf, in a short time, so much the master of their affections, that the nobility began to be apprehensive, in their turn, that he meant something more than barely to refift their encroachments on the legal prerogatives annexed to his station.

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In the mean time, Frederick had very judiciously determined to form a strict connection with the Dutch, of the utility of whose friendship he grew daily more convinced. The famous treaty of Westphalia had lately been concluded. treaty peace and good order had been restored in Germany; and the republic of Holland had been folemnly acknowledged by Spain a free and independent state. The accession of territory it had also procured to Sweden on the German fide of the Baltic, and in the neighbourhood of the United Provinces, rendered an alliance between them and Denmark equally convenient for the protection of their respective territories against the attacks of that power; as it feemed inclineable to espouse the interests of France, of whose increasing greatness Holland began with reason to be jealous.

This conduct of Frederick did him great honour in the opinion of the difcerning part of the world. He could not take too many precautions to guard against so formidable a neighbour as Sweden was

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was now become. Exclusive of the power it had newly acquired, it was governed by as wife heads as any in all Christendom. The famous Oxenstiern. chancellor of that kingdom, had long prefided over all its concerns, both at home and abroad, with a wisdom and fuccess that acquired him the reputation of being the most consummate politician in Europe. It was he, on the death of Gustavus, who was judged worthy of fucceeding to the direction of that hero's plan; a talk of which he had acquitted himself to the admiration of both friends and enemies. While he held the reins of administration in Sweden, that realm enjoyed a prosperity and glory that gave it an importance which it never poffessed before nor fince.

The celebrated Christina, daughter and successor to Gustavus, followed the example of her father, in the respect and deference she shewed for Oxenstiern. This princess did not express any inclination to involve Sweden in any fresh hossilities; but, on her abdication, Charles 1654.

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X. the nephew of Gustavus, succeeding to her crown, refolved to renew the war that Gustavus had formerly waged against Poland. He made an irruption into that 1655. kingdom at the head of an army composed, in great measure, of those veteran officers and foldiers who had performed fuch exploits in Germany. Nothing was able to refift him; and his successes were fo rapid and furprizing that they alarmed all the North of Europe.

It was not the interest either of Denmark or of Holland, that Charles should remain in possession of that vast length of coast his arms had subdued. The latter. feriously attentive to the ballance of power in the Baltic, equipped a numerous squadron, in order to put a stop to his further progress. He was now master of almost the whole Southern shore of the Baltic; and was preparing to lay fiege to 1656. Dantzic, when Opdam, a Dutch admiral of great reputation, appeared in fight of that city, and obliged the Swedish mo-

narch to alter his intentions.

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Frederick beheld the prevention of that prince's designs with great satisfaction. He was eagerly watching the critical hour when to fall upon him with a probability of success; and was spirited to this meafure by the intrigues of the Imperial court, and of the Russians, as well as by the Dutch. The first of these powers bore a natural grudge to Sweden, that had ruined its greatness in Germany. The second had a longing eye on the spacious and fertile countries of Livonia and Ingria, through the acquisition of which it would have access to the Baltic; from whence it was impatient to have been fo long excluded.

But Frederick needed not the instigation of others: he had sufficient motives of his own to seek a rupture with Sweden. The provinces torn from Denmark, during the late war, occupied his mind continually, and he was passionately desirous of recovering them. The fortune of Charles, who began to be looked upon as another Gustavus, seemed, however, an invincible bar in the opinion of

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many of his council: but his courage and refolution were not to be abated by that obstacle: he was determined, at any rate, to enter the lifts with the Swedish monarch; and no argument could prevail upon him to defift from that intention. As foon as he had fettled with the Dutch the plan of their joint proceedings, he declared war in form; and a Danish army invaded Bremen, a German province ceded to Sweden by the treaty of Westphalia. In this manner was kindled as violent a war as ever broke out between Denmark and Sweden.

Charles, at this time, was in a full career of prosperity in Poland. No enemy durst face him in the open field; and all their efforts terminated in harraffing him on his marches, and in fatiguing his troops by fudden and irregular attacks. He was highly irritated against Frederick, whose friendship he had made several ineffectual attempts to fecure. As he was a prince equally prudent and circumspectful in the cabinet and in the field, he foon perceived it would be vain for him to remain any longer

1657.

longer in Poland, while the whole power of Denmark was attacking him at his own doors. He wisely, therefore, gave up the pursuit of any more conquests at too great a distance from home; and returned, in all diligence, to face this new enemy.

Frederick was by no means a match for Charles, who was one of the greatest generals of the age. Neither were the Danes to be compared to the Swedes, in point of military skill and valour. The fate of the war was quickly decided at the approach of the king of Sweden; who foon made the Danish court sensible of the wrong step it had taken in attacking him. So great was the terror of his name, that the Danish army durst not venture to give him battle. It retreated before him as fast as he advanced, and he found himfelf master of Holstein almost without opposition. In like manner, Wrangel, his principal general, a warrior bred in the school of Gustavus, chased the Danes out of Bremen; pursuing them to the very shores of the Baltic; where he took Fre-

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dericfode, a place of the greatest strength and consequence in all Jutland.

At sea, however, the Danes had better success, and defeated the Swedes in an engagement that was so much to their disadvantage, that they were obliged to put into their nearest ports. On the frontiers of Sweden, they also engaged and routed the Swedes, who sustained a considerable loss, and were disabled from prosecuting any further operations in that quarter during the remainder of that campaign.

But Charles, whose intrepid mind was ever intent on extraordinary undertakings, had projected a design that quickly brought matters to a speedier termination than either his friends or his soes had been aware of. After the Danes had been driven from the Continent, and had withdrawn to their islands, they fancied themselves secure from any further enterprizes on the part of Frederick, as they were superiour at sea. Full of this considence, they were making preparations to try their fortune again in the field, and waiting, with-

without any apprehensions from the Swedes, the arrival of the auxiliary forces that were expected from Holland, at the opening of the spring.

But the Swedish monarch, determined to give the Danes no respite, formed the bold and aftonishing resolution to penetrate into the heart of Denmark in the dead of winter, while the fea was frozen. by marching his army over the ice. This plan, full of intrepidity and danger, Charles kept locked up in his own breaft. until the moment of execution. His very generals, accustomed to perform uncommon deeds under his command, were furprised when they found whither he was about to lead them. But fortune feemed to delight in justifying his undauntedness. He passed into Funen, the largest and most important of the Danish islands, next to Zealand; reducing it, and making a large body of Danes prisoners. He crossed as fortunately into Zealand itself, and encamped in fight of Copenhagen.

Thus Frederick found himself assailed by a victorious and exasperated enemy; 1658.

who seemed fully resolved to keep no meafures with him, and who had every reafon to treat him with the utmost feverity. What added to the diffress of Frederick was the distance his allies were at, and the utter impossibility of their bringing him any relief. The forces left by Charles to protect his chief conquests in Poland. afforded full employment for the Poles at home; and the rigour of the feafon was fuch throughout the Northern feas, that the Dutch were now totally thut out of that element. To complete these difficulties, Copenhagen was in the most forlorn and defenceless condition: the garrison weak and dispirited; and the inhabitants full of murmurs and discontents. It had hardly any provisions or necessaries of any kind for a fiege, and the fortifications were old and fcarcely deferving the name.

In so calamitous a situation Frederick was glad to compound with Charles at any rate. A treaty was accordingly concluded under the mediation of England; whereby an entire cession was made to Sweden

den of all that Denmark possessed on the Northern side of the Baltic; consisting of the provinces of Schonen, Bleking, and Bahus. Norway was also dismembered on this occasion, and the large district of Drontheim yielded to Sweden. These were severe terms: but they were the only price that Charles would accept of for a peace; and Frederick was compelled to submit to them, in order to save his country, which would infallibly have become the prey of his enemy, had he made the least hesitation in complying with them.

The loss of so many countries was certainly a terrible mortification to Denmark. The two sirst, in particular, were not only very rich and valuable, but served as an entrance into the heart of Sweden; and were, at the same time, a monument of the ancient empire and ascendancy of the Danes over the Swedish nation.

Thus the fortune of Denmark, which had so long been superiour to that of Sweden, and had ballanced it until then, was at last forced to bow before the victorious

star of Charles; who may justly be styled the first great humiliator of the Danes: That people having never since his time, been able either to recover their losses, or to regain their equality with the Swedes in the field.

Notwithstanding therestoration of peace between the two kings, there still remained heart-burnings on both sides that could not easily be stifled. Frederick felt with the utmost impatience and disquietude the hardships he laboured under, in consequence of the misfortunes of the late war. Charles, on the other hand, thought he had narrowly missed the opportunity of setting the crown of the three Northern kingdoms on his head; and imagined he had been too easily prevailed upon to grant terms of accommodation.

These reciprocal animosities were increased by sundry difficulties that occurred in carrying into execution the treaty of pacification. The Swedes, elated with their successes, acted with a strain of superiority that highly exasperated the Danes; and these, already sourced with their losses,

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were further provoked by this behaviour, and opposed the Swedish pretentions with equal spirit and acrimony.

From these, and other motives. Charles continued his forces in the Danish dominions, under pretence that the conditions of the late treaty were not yet fulfilled. But the truth was, that he apprehended a renewal of hostilities on the part of Denmark, as foon as Frederick should be at liberty to manifest his sentiments. He knew the Dutch emissaries in that prince's court were bufy in reviving the flame for lately extinguished. He was no less senfible of the great antipathy borne him by the house of Austria, and that it would leave no method untried to keep him employed at a distance from the empire. Neither was he ignorant that the chief members of this powerful body, once fo friendly to Sweden, were greatly altered in their affections; and that standing in no need of its affiftance, they were unwilling to espouse its concerns; and rather began to cast an envious eye on its acquisitions in Germany; though they were the very

moderate reward of the immense services done to the empire by the great Gustavus, and the arms and councils of Sweden.

Revolving all these things in his mind. he took the resolution of entering immediately upon action, and of beginning with that enemy from whom he promifed himfelf the least refistance. This enemy was evidently Denmark. The greatest part of it was already in his hands, and the remainder was but feebly guarded. Frederick, who imagined that Charles had ample reason to be satisfied with his advantages, little thought that he harboured any hostile designs against his realm; and did not, therefore, deem it necessary to keep any confiderable body of forces on foot. But, notwithstanding these pacific appearances, Charles was firmly perfuaded that Denmark was an irreconcileable foe, fecretly determined to injure him to the utmost of its power, though unwilling, because unable, to shew its enmity at prefent.

Encouraged by his past victories, and full of the most sangnine hope that fortune would continue to favour him as she always had done, he refolved, without delay, to break the peace he had forced the Danish court to purchase at so dear a rate; and to strike, at once, a conclusive blow, by carrying the war into the center of Denmark, and befieging the capital itself, while the terror his triumphs had diffused, was still fresh, and able to make a deep impression on the minds of his enemies. This resolution was taken and executed with fo much promptitude and vigour, that he was landed in Zealand ere the least intimation of his design had reached Copenhagen.

This renewal of hostilities, against all expectation, alarmed all his neighbours. His numerous enemies now represented him as a prince of the most insatiable ambition. He was accused of entertaining the most boundless and unwarrantable views: such, indeed, as were so romantic and chimerical, that it is highly improbable so judicious and penetrating a monarch

narch should have ever adopted them. It was reported that he confidered himfelf as destined to renew the empire and the conquests of the Alarics and the Attillas, and to reign the supreme arbiter of Europe.

It is probable enough that he looked upon the conquest of Denmark as certain. His confidence in this particular went fo far, that he had previously disposed of the chief governments in that monarchy, to his favourite generals and courtiers. He had even proposed to himself to transfer the feat of his empire from Stockholm, and remove it nearer to the German shore. Full of these lofty ideas, it is not surprizing that he received the remonstrances and expostulations of Frederick with haughtiness and disdain, and treated his deputies with the utmost superciliousness and pride.

Frederick, however, though furprized, was not intimidated by this arrogant behaviour; and prepared himself to act the part of both a king and a foldier on this eritical occasion. To do this prince jus-

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tice, notwithstanding he was, on the whole, rather an unfortunate general in the field, yet his personal courage was clear and undisputed; and he was indued with a firmness of mind that could not be subdued by the crossest events. This he had shewn during the whole course of the antecedent war; and had contributed not a little by his intrepidity, to preserve the spirit of his subjects, and to enable them to make some very resolute stands upon various occasions.

But it was chiefly on this terrible emergency that his courage and magnanimity appeared in their highest lustre, and gained him the universal affection and confidence of his subjects, together with the esteem and admiration of all Europe. As soon as the enemy's designs on the metropolis were discovered, he was advised by several of his courtiers and ministers to withdraw to a place of safety, and by no means expose himself to the chances of war: as, if any accident befel him, it would inevitably be attended with the ruin of the kingdom. But Frederick rejected the advice

vice without hesitation, wisely foreseeing that his absence would be the greatest discouragement to his people. He, therefore, instantly resolved to defend his capital in person, to the last extremity. Assembling his council, with the chief nobility, and principal citizens, he imparted his resolution to them; and, in a speech full of that courage and spirit that became his circumstances, exhorted them, in a manner entirely worthy of a king, to do their duty, and demean themselves like men whose all was at stake; and who, if overcome at this juncture, would have nothing else to lose.

His behaviour and conduct produced the happiest effects. It revived the courage of the Danish nobility; and inspired them with the resolution of sacrificing themselves, to the last man, sooner than surrender Copenhagen to the Swedes. It did still more; it prompted them to forego those privileges of which they had been so long, and so pertinaciously jealous: they generously and unanimously resolved that in order to encourage the inhabit-

ants of Copenhagen to a resolute desence of the city, they should henceforth enjoy lands and estates on the same sooting with the nobles of Denmark; promising, at the same time, on their part, to contribute their due proportion in the payment of taxes.

Animated by the discourse and example of the king, and no less by the honourable dealing of the nobility, the burghers, in a solemn convention of their different fraternities, came to a determination to form themselves into regular companies, and to share every kind of duty in common with the military. They waited on the king, and gallantly informed him their lives were at his service; nobly assuring him he might depend on their dying with their swords in their hands, rather than survive the destruction of their country.

Frederick, from this moment, began to conceive better hopes than he had hitherto entertained. In order to shew by his actions in what manner he intended himself, and expected that all people should receive the enemy, he pitched his

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tent, and erected his royal standard on the ramparts of Copenhagen: bravely declaring that he defired no man should be more exposed to danger than himself; and that it behoved him to stand or fall at the head of his subjects.

These instances of magnanimity in Frederick were highly seasonable. Nothing less, indeed, could have preserved the capital of Denmark from falling into the hands of the Swedes; whose invasion was so unexpected, that Frederick had but just time enough to shut himself up in the city, with what troops he could muster, in the greatest hurry. The garrison consisted of no more than two thousand effective men, exclusive of the burghers.

But, as few disagreeable events happen that are not alleviated by some advantage, the loss of the Danish possessions in the southern parts of Sweden, had produced one good effect in favour of Denmark. Copenhagen being no longer situated in the center of the kingdom, but become, on the contrary, the very frontier to Sweden, it was necessary to fortify

and strengthen it against a foe, whose first attacks would henceforth, in all probability, be directed against it. Frederick had, accordingly, employed the whole interval between the late treaty and the present rupture, in repairing and augmenting the fortifications of his capital: and he had rendered it, by this time, so desensible, that, notwithstanding the surprize occasioned by the sudden landing of the Swedes, it was looked upon as in a sit condition to give them a proper reception.

Still, however, this invasion was a most dangerous and alarming event, as it violated the treaty of peace just concluded between the two crowns, on the faith of which the Danish court relied with implicit security. The utmost speed was requisite to put every thing in the necessary posture of desence. And here it was that Frederick exerted a care and vigilance adequate to the important task he had undertaken. He visited every post in person; and employed his strictest attention in providing for all contingencies. He

displayed, in short, an activity of mind and body that insused life and courage into every one. The preparations were carried on with so much alacrity, that when the enemy sat down before the city, he found another kind of resistance would be made than he had been induced to imagine, from the intelligence he depended upon, that Copenhagen was not sufficiently sortified to stand a regular siege.

Frederick, in the mean time, was too judicious to rely entirely on the strength of Denmark, for the repulse of so formidable a power as that of Sweden. Immediately on hearing the news of the Swedish army's debarkation in Zealand, he dispatched to Holland the famous Beuningen, minister of that republic at his court, in order to apprize his constituents of the necessity of his receiving the speediest relief. This celebrated negociator was a man who too well understood the interests of his country to act remissly in an affair wherein it was fo deeply concerned. He laid the case before the states with

with so much energy, that he instantly obtained his demands. The Dutch, sully convinced that without their timeliest assistance, Copenhagen would, in all probability, sall into the hands of Charles, ordered a large sleet to be equipped, and a considerable body of land forces to be got ready with all possible diligence. To do them justice, they were at that period a very active and resolute people; and were equally ready to affert their interest or their dignity; as most of the potentates in Europe had occasionally experienced.

In the mean time, the siege of Copen-hagen was carried on with the most obstinate sury by the Swedes; who met, however, with no less fortitude in the resistance made by the Danes; among whom no man distinguished himself more than their king. He spent the days and nights in animating his people, and in regulating every motion: he underwent all manner of toil in common with the meanest soldiers: he was present wherever the enemy made his approaches: he appeared always foremost in the hottest service, and might Vol. I.

strictly be said to preside in every danger.

Charles, who had promifed himself an easy reduction of the Danish metropolis, was equally perplexed and exasperated at his disappointment. He exerted all his military talents on this occasion; and omitted nothing that a great general could do in order to compass his design. But the Danes were no longer to be frighted at his operations as formerly. They had, in the course of the late war, not a little profited by their various encounters with the Swedish troops; and were now so well inured to the bufiness of fighting, that Charles began to look upon them in quite another light than heretofore. They not only withflood all the attacks he was inceffantly making on every fide, but made a number of desperate sallies on the befiegers, wherein these were usually the much greater fufferers.

To maintain the reputation of his arms, and appear still the superiour, Charles detached a great part of his forces to invest Cronenburg, a place esteemed stronger than than Copenhagen. By taking this fortress he doubted not to strike terror into the garrison of the capital, and convince them that, soon or late, they must undergo the same sate. But, though he succeeded in this attempt, it was so far from proving of any real service to him, that it weakened his army, by the loss of men that sell before that place surrendered. Charles, however, slushed with this success, redoubled his efforts against Copenhagen.

He now resolved to make a vigorous assault on a quarter that he imagined less sortissed than any other. To this purpose he selected the bravest of his troops, who were led on by the most expert and intrepid of his officers; himself directing the whole attack. It was made with that impetuosity and resolution habitual to men long used to war. But Frederick, who expected to be assailed in this quarter, had made so proper a disposition, that, aster a long and bloody dispute, the Swedes, were repulsed with the loss of many of the best officers and soldiers in their army.

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The next attempt of Charles was on the isle of Ammack, contiguous to the city, and from which it drew confiderable supplies of provisions. He landed on it with a chosen body of men, and forced the Danish detachment that guarded it to retire. But Frederick, who impatiently waited an occasion to encounter his rival in person, sallied out with a strong party, and fell upon the enemy with all imaginable vigour. Charles behaved with his usual intrepidity; but, notwithstanding the fuperiority of numbers was on his fide. the fortune of the day declared for Frederick. The Danes conducted their attack with fo much judgment, that the Swedes retreated with precipitation; and Charles was in fuch danger of being taken, that had not his guards facrificed themselves for his preservation, almost to a man, Frederick would have had the glory of making him his prisoner.

The siege had now lasted two months. The Swedish army was greatly reduced by the terrible slaughter made in so many assaults and sallies. But, though the be-

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sieged had hitherto resisted them with great courage and success, provisions began to fail them; and the Swedish sleet blocked up the port of Copenhagen so closely, that it was impossible to receive any relief on that side. They were reduced to great distresses, and began to dread that samine would compel them at last to surrender. They remained some days in this extremity, and were almost on the point of despair, when the joyful tydings came that the Dutch sleet, so long promised and expected, was arrived, and under full sail for Copenhagen.

It was commanded by the same Opdam who had not long before prevented Charles from laying siege to Dantzic. This celebrated admiral had again the honour of deseating the designs of that warlike prince, by compelling him to raise the siege of Copenhagen. The Swedish squadron lay in his way, commanded by Wrangel, whose bravery had raised him to the post of high admiral of Sweden, at a time when merit alone was considered in all military preferments. The strength

of both fleets was nearly equal. Opdam engaged that of Sweden with great refolution; and after a sharp conflict, attended with no small bloodshed on each fide, he happily forced his paffage into the port of Copenhagen. This at once decided the fate of that city, and freed it from all apprehensions of falling into the hands of the Swedes.

But Charles was not of a temper to give up the hopes he had fo long and fo confidently cherished. He still determined to keep Copenhagen, if not befieged, at least blockaded. For this purpose he reinforced his army with confiderable bodies both of horse and foot. His intention was to wait till the depth of winter, before he made any further attempt on Copenhagen. That feafon had always proved favourable to his undertakings. . It was over a bridge of ice he had found a paffage in his former invasion of Denmark, as well as in various other enterprizes; and he flattered himself, in like manner, to be as fortunate in what he now proposed; which was no less than to take Copenhagen by storm.

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The project he was meditating being the last, and the only one he relied upon, as, if it failed, all others were fruitless, he neglected nothing that could in any wife contribute to its success. A variety of engines and machines of all kinds were prepared, and invented upon this occasion; and his men were continually exercifed in the use and employment of them.

Mean time, in order to amuse Frederick, and divert his attention from the main point he had in view, he threw out propofals of peace, accompanied with infinuations of the strength and the number of his forces. These infinuations were intended to terrify the Danish monarch, and, if possible, to bring him to those humiliating terms that Charles offered him. But the courage and penetration of Frederick were equally proof against his artifice and his menaces. He gave him to understand that he had the foul of a king, and was not to be intimidated into any thing that was base and disgraceful. It is even said that his wrath and indig-P 4

nation were roused to such a pitch on this occasion, that he sent word to Charles he would gladly be informed when and where he proposed to make his next attack; that he might have the fatisfaction of meeting him, in person, sword in hand. To which it is reported Charles replied, with his usual spirit, that Frederick might always find him where danger and glory were to be found.

The Swedish monarch was now convinced that nothing but the daring scheme he had been preparing was to be depended on. His foldiers were, by this time, fufficiently instructed in the handling of the various implements to be used on this emergency. After giving several false alarms to the garrison, to perplex and deceive their vigilance, he refolved at last to carry his defigns into real execution.

It was now the beginning of February, 1659. the month when the rigour of winter is most severe in those Northern climes. The ditches of Copenhagen were entirely frozen; and the space of ground between

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the city and the Swedish camp was one continued plain of hardened snow. This was what Charles had impatiently waited for. The ramparts had been so battered, that in several places there were considerable breaches: through these it was that Charles now hoped to force his entrance into the city.

In order, if it were practicable, to come on the befieged unawares, it was judged adviseable to affault them by night. The tenth of that month was fixed upon for this purpole. On the approach of evening Charles led on his whole army, divided into three formidable bodies, which at once began three separate attacks. The coolness, and, at the same time, the intrepidity were equal on both fides. The Swedes, according to their orders, advanced in the deepest filence; and, covered by the darkness, gained the very foot of the ramparts before they were perceived. But the Danes, who had long been prepared for them, feized that critical instant, and began the most dreadful fire upon them from every place whence they

they could be annoyed. There was hardly any device and method of destruction forgotten by the besieged on this bloody and memorable occasion. As the advantage of position lay entirely on their side, their only business was to direct their firing in such a manner as to do the most extensive execution among the enemy. This they effected completely. The various machines the Swedes had brought to assist and protect them in the storming of the walls, were shattered to pieces, and a most horrid slaughter was made of the assailants.

Charles did not spare his person on this emergency. He remained, during the whole of this terrible conslict, within the reach of every fort of danger, and acted occasionally the part of a soldier, as well as of a commander. Never had he more reason to be satisfied with the behaviour of his men. They personmed astonishing feats of valour; but the difficulties they had to encounter were unsurmountable. They did not, however, despond, and their efforts were so fierce and obstinate,

that some good judges, who were eyewitnesses of their behaviour, declared that, had not most of their officers been either slain or wounded, they would have made themselves masters of Copenhagen.

This famous affault lasted the whole night. On the break of day Charles was obliged to give orders to retreat. The plan on which his last hopes were built was now utterly defeated: but what was much worse, a number of those valiant men had fallen to whom he owed his victories and his fame; and he had lost his principal generals Steinboc and Bannier, two great military names in Sweden; the first of whom was killed, the second made prisoner.

The behaviour of Frederick on this important occasion, was equal to that of Charles. The Swedish monarch seemed formed for an offensive, the Danish for a defensive part. They both eminently displayed these respective characters on this arduous trial; and acquitted themselves in such a manner, that it was universally agreed

agreed, the unshaken perseverance of the Swedes, throughout fo long and destructive an attack, was due to the warmth and activity with which their king directed all their motions; and that the firm and determinate refistance of the Danes. was owing to the undaunted calmness and presence of mind, with which their monarch envifaged every difficulty and danger. No prince, in short, appeared more fitted by nature for the critical fituation in which fortune had placed him. His abilities feemed to increase in proportion to his exigencies, and his ardour and courage rendered him infensible of fatigue. The hardships he underwent during the whole course of the fiege, were indeed so great and constant, arising from the severity of the season, that they ruined his constitution, and accelerated his end. But he always took a noble pride in the cause of his bad state of health, often saying that he should thereby die the death of a hero.

As the chief praise in repelling the enemy in this decisive conflict was incontestibly

testibly due to Frederick, it may equally be faid that, by the superiour examples he gave, throughout the whole war, of constancy and fortitude in facing all manner of perils and distresses, he contributed more than any man to the prefervation of his kingdom. It is even probable, according to the accounts of that time, that had his defires, in various instances, been complied with, many of those calamities might have been prevented. When they came upon him, however, he generously forgot that others had been more accessory in causing them than himself; and he manfully prepared to give them a resolute meeting.

The repulse of this terrible assault of the Swedes on Copenhagen, entirely ruined their army; and obliged Charles to lay aside his designs on the Danish metropolis. On the return of spring, the Dutch sent another sleet to the assistance of Frederick, under the command of the renowned Ruyter. This gave so heavy a check to Sweden, that its sleets durst not appear at sea.

In the mean time, the emperor and the elector of Brandenburgh, who both equally hated and dreaded the Swedes, had levied a powerful army for the relief of Denmark. It had forced the Swedish troops to evacuate all their conquests in Holstein and Jutland, and to retire into the Danish islands: their numbers, indeed, were so greatly reduced by the many skirmishes and engagements that daily happened, and by the various attempts they had been inceffantly making, that they were no longer able to face so numerous a body as their enemies amounted to; and were now constrained every where to act merely on the defensive.

In order to improve their superiority, and give at once a decisive blow, the confederates resolved to attack the isle of Funen, where a chosen body of Swedish troops lay incamped. They landed, accordingly, under the protection of the Dutch sleet. The Swedes, notwithstanding their very great inferiority in numbers, waited for them without any dismay. They were the flower of Charles's army, and had long been

been used to victories over still larger numbers than those they were going to engage with. Relying on their good fortune, and their discipline, they received the confederates with the most undaunted bravery; and fought with such obstinacy and firmness, that the imperial foot in the center, and the Danish cavalry on the right wing, were totally routed, and put to flight.

The Swedes were headed by the prince of Sultzbach, a German warriour in great esteem and favour with Charles. He now thought himself sure of winning the battle. Conformably to the military rules established by the great Gustavus, and saithfully adhered to, and recommended by Charles, he left the disordered enemies to fly without pursuit; and, collecting his whole strength, advanced immediately on those who still kept the field.

Happily for the confederates, there was in their army a confiderable body of those British veterans in Dutch pay, that had performed such eminent services for the states in the Flemish wars. They acquitted themselves, on this occasion, in a

manner fuitable to what was expected of them. They composed the left wing. After routing the Danes and Imperialifts, the Swedish general fell with the whole weight of his victorious troops upon this body; but it stood immoveable, and repelled his efforts with fo much refolution and constancy, that the remainder of the confederate army had full leifure to rally and return to the charge. By this time the Swedes were fo fatigued, and their numbers so diminished, that they were unable to refist the impression of such multitudes of affailants. They gave way on all fides, and were at last so completely defeated, that only Sultzbach, with about a dozen more principal officers, escaped from the field. He was a brave and refolute commander, and his behaviour and conduct in this action, though he was unfortunate, did him great honour.

This was the most signal defeat that had ever befallen the arms of Charles. It broke all his measures, and frustrated all his hopes. He bore it, however, with his usual magnanimity; and though he

was too judicious to entertain any further expectations of fubduing Denmark, yet he still resolved to keep a footing in that kingdom, till fuch a peace was made as should bring him both honour and profit. But he did not long survive the reverse of his fortune.

After his death, the Swedish nation, 1660. wearied with a long and tedious war against so many powers, were glad to conclude a general peace with all: but Frederick had no reason to be satisfied with Holland, for which Denmark had been almost sacrificed, treated him in a most ungenerous manner. The successes of the confederates against Sweden were fo great, and it was fo little in the power of that kingdom to refift the torrent of fo many enemies, that the Danish monarch had every right to promise himself a full restitution of all that the Swedes had wrested from him at the former peace. But, contrary to his justest expectations, he was wholly abandoned; and the only alteration in that treaty, was that Sweden restored to Denmark the district of Drontheim Vot. I.

theim in Norway. Thus ended the most bloody and ruinous war that ever Denmark was engaged in. It lost all its possessions in Sweden; and, what was still more detrimental, it lost that equality in the general system of power and importance which it had so long maintained against its ancient rival.

On the conclusion of the peace between the two Northern crowns, a more extraordinary scene was opened in Denmark, than it had ever seen. Since the accession of Frederick III. to the crown, the Danish nobility had behaved, on various occasions, in such a manner as had given great offence, not only to the king, but to his subjects; most of whom were highly distatisfied with the undue share of authority the nobles possessed, and usually exercised to the general grievance and discontent.

This authority was very disproportionate to what it had been originally; and was increased far beyond those bounds at which it had been fixed by the laws in former ages. The nobles, from being the patrons and protectors of the subordinate orders, were, in several instances, become their oppressors and tyrants. They had, within the space of the last century, by means of their immense wealth, ingrossed by degrees almost the whole power of the state.

The monarchs who reigned during that period, and who were all men of equal fense and spirit, had used the most confant and resolute endeavours to refift their usurpations. Through the prudence and policy of these princes they had been no less vigorously opposed by the other members of the national diets. These frequently united in support of the crown. They carried many determinations in its favour; and afferted its prerogatives with great zeal. They even had occasionally credit and ability sufficient to extend them. This was a measure they seldom failed to embrace and purfue with the utmost warmth whenever circumstances concurred to render it practicable. They judged it the more conducive to the common interest, as it was, in fact, the only counterpoife

terpoise to the oppressive weight of the nobles.

It was owing to these repeated struggles in its defence that the regal dignity and fway maintained its ground; and that while the nobility, through the ascendency annexed to vast riches and possessions, was enabled to incroach on the rights and privileges of the other orders, the crown. on the other hand, was equally active in confirming and enlarging its prerogatives. The progress it made, though filent as it were, and not apparently confiderable, vet alarmed the clear fighted among the nobles, who could not behold the increasing popularity of the court throughout the nation at large, without feeling disquietude for the consequences.

Still, however, they continued to enjoy a portion of authority utterly inconfistent with the general welfare of the realm. The succession to the crown was, in some respects, wholly at their disposal. They obliged the kings, at their election, to grant them as many privileges as they thought proper to demand. Thus, on the

commencement of every reign, additions were made to the already extravagant measure of their particular immunities. By such means the Danish constitution had been much altered from what it was in preceding times. From a limited monarchy, wherein the government was equally divided between the king, the nobles, and the inferior classes, it had been almost transformed into an aristocracy; the nobles often assuming to themselves the rights of both prince and people, and exercising exclusively the authority belonging to these two branches of the legislature.

What made, at the present time, their excesses in these matters the more insolent and intolerable, was that, notwithstanding the style of supreme command they affected on these occasions, their insluence was on the decline, and subsisted more through the forbearance, than the inability to suppress it, of the many to whom it had so long been obnoxious. They ruled, in short, through the force of

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prescription, and were more obeyed from habit than through respect or fear.

But the injudiciousness and the arrogance of their conduct became at length fo notorious, and was attended with fo many pernicious effects, that the whole nation grew heartily defirous of the reformation of fo manifest an abuse; which effentially infringed their liberties, and deprived them of that share of influence in the government which their ancestors had fo long possessed, and been so jealous to maintain. The king no less complained of the dangerous confequences refulting from this unjust partition of power. He had not forgot the defign of the nobles to exclude him from the throne, and had long refolved to revenge himfelf upon. this factious body of men. The people knew his disposition, and he was as well acquainted with their dislike of the nobility's conduct in general. Hence it was obvious that a violent contest would ensue on the first emergency.

These animosities had, of late years, been productive of much mischief. They had created a disaffectedness and disunion between the upper and the lower classes that had, on various occasions, injured, in no small degree, the cause of the public, by producing an indifference for the common good, which degenerated, as it always does, into saintheartedness and despondency. Thus the national spirit was impaired, and the welfare of the state was neglected, through the discontent occasioned by a set of men whose ambition led them incessantly to sacrifice their country to their private aggrandizement, in the most barefaced and most insulting manner.

Previous to these stal usurpations of the Danish nobles over the rights of their sellow-subjects, the Danes were a people whose measures and transactions, both at home and abroad, were the free result of national deliberation. They were not, as now, almost the mere passive instruments of the will and pleasure of the nobility. Whatever was then to be done, in the name, and by the authority of the public, received the unconstrained sanction of the

affembled community. The fame refor luteness that presided in these assemblies, accompanied and guided their operations in the field. This was no more than natural and consequential. The nobles, who possessed the chief, though not the absolute authority, were men of high spirit. As they enjoyed the principal posts in the army, they carried into the fenate that bold determinate frame of temper which they had learnt in the camp; and thus were equally qualified to shine in either province. The commonalty, though not placed on the same level of rank or privileges, were still a body of men of no small influence in their ollective capacity; and always afferted, with great vigour, the rights and immunities peculiar to their order. All this inspired them with a proportionable degree of elevation; and it is too well known to need any explanation, how much the minds of men acquire of courage and fortitude, from being confidered by others, and confidering themfelves as persons of weight and importance.

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From all these causes the Danes, in those days, made a very distinguished and respectable figure. Their conduct, both in peace and in war, was usually attended with dignity and reputation, and they were very deservedly accounted a brave and a wise nation. At home they lived in a state of freedom and of plenty; abroad their valour was conspicuous in many signal instances.

In the mean time, the court, whose authority was confined within very narrow bounds, was permitted no other influence than what proceeded from the wildom of its plans for the good of the whole. Their very kings were obliged, for the fake of preserving the respect due to their persons, to be very cautious how they conducted themselves in private as well as in public. As the crown was elective, notwithstanding no breaches were made in the lineal succession, from father to fon, while no objection appeared to their personal characters, yet, in case of any offence given, they knew the people had still the power of making an alteration,

ation, whenever they thought it adviseable. They knew that power had been occasionally exerted; and for that reason demeaned themselves in such a manner as to merit the favour and affections of their subjects; whose allegiance, they were conscious, was sounded only on the good opinion they entertained of their rulers.

Thus, the kings of Denmark were usually men of great moderation and fagacity; and generally very popular from the necessity they found themselves under to keep fair with all parties, and orders of their subjects. They were particularly well educated, from a very obvious motive, that of paternal affection. As every monarch naturally endeavoured to fecure the fuccession to his son, every method was taken to render him worthy of the public choice. Nothing therefore was neglected to qualify him for a throne; and no individuals were, in point of education, more strictly attended to than those belonging to the royal family. The effects of this care were equally honourable and and visible to the world; no princes in Europe exceeding, in that knowledge and learning becoming a crowned head, the sovereigns of Denmark; several of whom were conspicuously remarkable for their proficiency in the liberal arts, and the protection they afforded literature, both by their countenance and example.

Another circumstance highly favourable to the royal character in Denmark, was the benignity and frankness of behaviour long established in that country, between the king and his subjects. They courted his presence; and approached him with an almost filial confidence. He was looked upon, very unseignedly, as the protector of all his people; of the lower classes established from their grievances in his interposition between them and their, sometimes, too severe superiors the nobles.

From this, and other concurring causes, such as the hospitality, bountifulness, and liberality, constantly exercised in their domestic way of living, and, above all, the munisicence they displayed in every

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public undertaking, the kings of Denmark grew to a height of personal influence, that made their condition as perfectly defireable, and as truly great, as any man of reasonable ambition could aspire to. They wanted, indeed, that which it is a pity any human being should ever possess, and which no good prince ought to wish for; they wanted the power of acting in all things without controll. But, on the other hand, they were fure of never being thwarted, while they governed with justice and propriety, and confulted earnestly the good of their people. These were so ready, upon all occasions, to submit to their directions, that they very feldom differed in opinion from their fovereigns, and hardly ever shewed any inclination to lay restraints upon them.

Neither did this complying humour proceed from any blind partiality in the Danes, to the persons of their monarchs. The truth was, the latter were highly careful to engage in no scheme that might sow jealousy between them and their subjects;

jects; and, indeed, the fortunate impracticability of carrying any pernicious designs into execution, never suffered any to enter into their ideas. The result was, that no heart-burnings, no suspicions, no alarms, were given or taken on either side; and that peace and unanimity at home, were established on the sirmest basis, that of mutual considence between the sovereign and his people, sounded on a clear and well comprehended union of interests, and a cordial disposition to embrace every opportunity of testifying a reciprocal benevolence and attachment.

Such, in general, was the character, and such the condition of the Danish nation and monarchy; especially since the accession of the house of Oldenburg to the throne of that kingdom.

While government was, in this manner, carried on to the general satisfaction of both prince and people, nothing remained to complete the national happiness, by securing it beyond any probable possibility of alteration, but to enlarge the soundations it rested upon, by granting a

further charter of immunities to the commoner classes. That somewhat of this nature was necessary, had been hinted on feveral occasions, even by some of the nobility themselves, either from motives of humanity, or of policy. Perhaps these latter motives preponderated; as the very remarkable warmth of the common people, on fundry occasions, in favour of the fovereign, awakened in those of the nobility, whose knowledge and penetration into things went beyond that of others, an apprehension that, by monopolising so much of the general prosperity to themfelves, the other classes might, in a fit of indignation, revenge themselves, by throwing down the fences that stood between the crown and absolute power, in order to bring the nobility to a level with themfelves.

Happy had it been for all parties, for the nobles especially, if these wise and laudable sentiments had been adopted by the whole body. But that intemperate spirit of selfishness which as often animates whole assemblies, as it does the bofom of individuals, suffered them not to take those steps that were necessary to secure their own prosperity; and they remained in the satal resolution of ingrossing as much as they could of the public liberty.

This unhappy selfishness betrayed itself on every occasion. Whenever the secondary classes expressed any impatience at the too heavy weight laid upon them, the nobles never made any concession, unless the exigencies of the times were such as absolutely compelled them: and even then their condescension was always accompanied with so ill a grace, that, instead of being considered by the commons as an obligation conferred upon them, it always had the manifest appearance of being, as it really was, extorted by their clamours, and yielded to through mere necessity.

Thus, in every contest between the nobles and the commons, from the unconciliating, oppressive behaviour of the former, the bands of union between them grew stacker by degrees; and they surnished

constant opportunities to the court of becoming umpire in all their debates. This indeed was a necessary consequence; as it was the only tribunal to which they could make their appeal. How this would end at last, was obvious to every thinking perfon. But the majority of the nobles were fo unaccountably infatuated as either not to fee, or, from haughtiness and resentment, to overlook the danger they were exposing themselves to, until it became too strong and too powerful for relistance.

This unpardonable treatment of the inferiour classes, never appeared in a clearer and more odious light, than in that celebrated convention of the states of the kingdom, which placed Frederick I. on the throne, after the expulsion of that cruel prince Christian II. As he held the crown merely by the donation of the people of Denmark, and had been elected purely because he could have no interest in the kingdom, distinct from those who had drove out his predecessor, he found himself quite unable to withstand any demands on the

part of his fubjects. This they well knew, and were determined to firetch them to the utmost. Accordingly, both the nobility and the clergy joined together on this critical occasion, and besides their former privileges, which were great and many, they infifted upon and obtained a multiplicity of others. In short, whatever they asked was granted. The new king, who was no other than a creature of their choice, could not have a will of his own at this juncture, and was glad to compound for a diadem at any rate; leaving to his posterity to amplify the meafure of the royal power, or trufting perhaps to some favourable opportunity to increase it, if possible, himself.

But while the privileges of the nobility and the clergy were thus folemnly confirmed and augmented, the commons were in a manner forgotten. What was done in their behalf was very trifling indeed. It feemed, in fact, as if the nobility and clergy had agreed to fettle the government into a downright aristocracy. The petitions and remonstrances of the lower Vol. I. R classes.

classes, though they could not, by law, be denied admittance and notice, yet, when debated, met with very little countenance or respect; and, excepting some few regulations which in common justice and decency could not be resused them, they quickly sound that the prosperity and ease of their suture condition was to depend on the spirit they should exert in their own support; and that they were not to look on the nobles and the clergy in the light of friends, but rather as cooperators in the iniquitous design of loading them with all manner of oppression:

From this memorable period, chiefly, began the reciprocal hatred and mistrust between the upper and the lower orders in Denmark. This situation was an unavoidable consequence of what has just been related. It was not possible that, after expressing so barefaced an intention of acting the part of tyrants, the nobles should ever meet with any manner of considence in the commons; who, on their side, could not certainly be blamed

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for trying all in their power to refift those who meant to use them as slaves.

Such were the causes of that enmity, the consequences of which proved in the course of time so dreadful to both parties. This enmity acquired fresh strength from day to day. At every meeting of the states the absurd haughtiness of the nobles afforded fresh causes of discontent to the commons, whose weight and importance they strove, by every means, to diminish, and even occasionally to deride. This latter was an offence of the deepest die: affronts and contempt being the last things that men can pardon; and making the most forcible and lasting impressions on their memory.

Neither could it be expected that in fuch rancorous conflicts, personal injuries would not sometimes take place. The nobles, from their superior riches and influence, had, doubtless, the advantage in most of these altercations. But still the commons found means to revenge themselves in some measure, if not by deeds, by invectives and reproaches; which

to lofty minds are often as cutting and injurious as real detriments.

But the worst circumstance attending this perpetual warfare in the state, was that as no variation of fortune ever happened, it became, at last, intolerable to the aggrieved and losing party. The commons, when they met in legal bodies, never failed to challenge their rights with great sirmness and resolution; but were always too seeble, when separated, to maintain their pretensions, and to resist the increachments of their superiors. The nobles, with their wonted pride and arrogance, making light of such regulations as were the effect of remonstrances that had nothing but justice to inforce them.

What powerfully contributed, for a time, to maintain the nobility in this excess of power, was the affistance of the clergy: who were, in a manner, a part of the nobility, through the dignity and exaltedness of their station, and the greatness of their possessions. This attached them close together; and the necessity they selt of being reciprocally supported by

by each other, created an union of interests which rendered them very willing to conclude, as it were, a tacit alliance, offensive and defensive, against the inferior orders of the state.

This confederacy, however, was destroyed by the reformation. The vicinity of Germany, where it began and spread itself apace, and where the nobility were enriching themselves with the spoils of the clergy, foon awakened in the Danish nobles a defire of following fo profitable an example. Accordingly, what through motives of conscience and piety, what through motives of interest, the princiciples of the reformation were foon introduced and established in Denmark. consequence of this great change, the possessions of the clergy were much curtailed, and they themselves, from being personages of the highest importance, were quickly reduced to a very inferiour fituation.

But, in effecting this revolution, another accompanied it, which the avidity of the nobles rendered them not in the

least aware of at that time. Though they increased their revenues, they deprived themselves of a most powerful support, by detaching the clergy from their in-This was the natural refult of tereft. their stripping them of so large a portion of their possessions. These, indeed might revert to them without much injustice: as they had been alienated, of old, from their families, through ignorance and superstition. But the clergy, who were the actual losers, and who faw themselves violently expelled from a state of power and opulence, to a state of mediocrity, at best, could not digest this usage. Perceiving, however, that the spirit of the times, and the opinions of men, concurred in thinking the meafure just and necessary, they made a virtue of necessity, and fat down with as much refignation as may be supposed in men who are conscious that all refistance is vain.

In this alteration of ecclefiastical affairs there remained, nevertheless, so much of forbearance in those who brought

brought it about, as to leave untouched many of the privileges of the clergy. That of constituting a part of the states was left them among the rest; and of this they foon found they could make an ample use in executing their vengeance upon the nobility. Some of these, indeed, had penetration enough to foresee how irreconcileable the clergy would prove to those who had had the chief hand in their humiliation; and entertained thoughts of taking the means of revenge out of their hands by placing them on the footing of ordinary subjects; and excluding them from any claims of forming a separate branch of the legislature. But, whether the generality of people imagined they had already loft enough, and that this would be too great an innovation, or. whether they found means, by their address, to avert the impending storm, they still preserved their seats in the states, and immediately became the forest thorn in the fides of the nobility.

This remarkable change in the religious constitution of the realm, happened dur-

ing the reign of Christian III. a prince who wanted not discernment to foresee that, foon or late, this change might open a way to another of no less importance, that of enlarging the power and prerogative of the crown. In order, therefore, to give furtherance to this defign, he shewed himself, occasionally, very ready to contribute to the relief and comfort of fuch of the clergy as had fuffered most in this general dilapidation; and by feizing every proper opportunity of befriending them, he shortly brought them to look on him rather as a friend and benefactor. than as one who had countenanced the destruction of their riches and influence.

In this manner was laid the foundation of the inveteracy that afterwards fubfifted between the nobility and the ecclefiastics.

Nothing, at the same time, could add more strength to the commons than this accession of the clergy; who became, in sact, members of that portion of the community, and acted in support of it with all possible zeal on every emergency. This they were the more effectually enabled to do,

do, as, from the reverence due to their character, they threw a weight into the scale they now favoured, which it had never felt before. But this only excited the resentment of the nobles, and irritated them to a pitch that often gave birth to the most violent disputes; which, indeed, grew much more frequent and dangerous than formerly, and had like, more than once, to have terminated in the subversion of the liberties of every part of the nation.

Mean while the court was not idle in availing itself of these dissensions; and its power began gradually to emerge from the mediocrity to which the stipulations made with Frederick I. had confined it. His son, Christian III. did not forget, as already mentioned, to lay hold of the opportunity afforded him by the reformation, to engage the clergy's interest in behalf of the crown. At the time of his decease, its insluence was so far improved, that his successor, Frederick II. sound, at his accession to the throne, a system and proportion of power which, though li-

mited by the usurpations of the nobility, still left him at liberty to extend his defigns beyond the sphere of Denmark, and to nourish projects for the aggrandizement of his crown abroad. In this situation he resolved to renew the pretensions of his ancestors in Sweden, and engaged his subjects in a very long war with that kingdom.

This war, though not answerable to the wishes he had entertained of rendering Sweden, what it formerly had been, a dependance of Denmark, was, nevertheless, productive of other consequences, which were materially subservient to the increase of the royal authority. The length of the war effected this in no small degree, through the number of enterprizes of which his ministry had, of course, the direction; and which habituated men to look on the crown, not only as the capital agent and conductor of all undertakings, but also as the principal fource whence all public defigns and councils were to emanate. It may be added, that the very determination to wage wage that war shewed how much the influence of the crown was augmented. The war, considered in itself, was certainly no necessary measure. The Danish nation could receive no advantage from it, as peace between Denmark and Sweden had been proved, by experience, equally beneficial to both. Such was the sense of the nation at large; and yet hostilities were resolved upon. This alone evinces how powerful the court party was become in the diet.

The royal prerogative and interest thus improved and strengthened by Frederick II. lost nothing in the hands of Christian IV. who succeeded him; and who, in the course of a very long reign, acted with so much prudence and circumspection, as to extend the authority of the crown much surther than his predecessors. But it ought to be recorded to his honour, that the influence he obtained was much more due to the considence justly reposed in his virtues and moderation, than acquired through the sinister intrigues so usual in courts. His character was too well known

for his subjects to fear that he aimed at any thing more earnestly than the prosperity of the public.

And yet, without meaning to depreciate the worth of this monarch, who certainly merited the highest commendations, it may, nevertheless, be observed that, without intending it, he prepared the chains with which his successor found means to bind the people of Denmark in fo short a time after his decease. True it is that his life was spent, for the most part, in a course of constant activity abroad, which, to some, might appear to preclude him from opportunities of carrying on any fet plan, at home, for the aggrandizement of the power of the crown, by fixing his attention too extenfively upon what was doing among his neighbours. So far indeed as relates to any determinate project of rendering himfelf more powerful than what the laws and conflitution allowed, he feems entirely guiltless; and ought the more readily to be absolved of harbouring defigns of fuch a nature, as he had no occasion

to entertain any fear of discontent among his subjects, of whose hearts and affections he was so much master.

But there is another way of leading a people to flavery: a way as far removed from violence as it is the furest to fuccess; and which they who know best how to make the passions of men subservient to their purposes, have always employed as the most effectual. This way consists in impressing people with a persuasion that, in whatever is done, their interest and glory are chiefly confulted; but, above all, in displaying a constant affability of behaviour, and industriously seizing opportunities of exercifing liberality and benevolence. It was formerly faid of the great Scipio, that his exploits in Spain, and expulsion of the Carthaginians from that country, were principally owing to the fame of his benignity and courteous disposition; and that he triumphed over Hannibal, rather through the obstinate attachment of the foldiery to his person, than through the superiority of his military skill. This attachment he had gained

gained by a conduct full of popularity; by an easy, condescending behaviour, that placed individuals on his own level; in short, by manifesting a fund of humanity that indeared him to all who approached him. By these means the armies under his command were, in a manner, rather his own, than those of the public; and the affection to Scipio became a greater object among the foldiers, than the fervice of the commonwealth. But this illuffrious example, which Scipio had fet to the Roman generals from noble and difinterested motives, was, afterwards, imitated with quite different views; and it became the fashion to win the soldiers hearts, in order to make use of their asfistance for the very worst purposes. the same manner it might have been said of Christian IV. that through the excellence of his personal character, he found means to arrive at an authority in the army, which was much greater than even they who were guided by it were fenfible of; and that, notwithstanding he was himself too honest a man to cherish arbitrary bitrary designs upon his country, yet, from that plenitude of military power, which the continuance of long wars had conferred upon him, a large proportion of his subjects contracted a habit of obedience to their sovereign, which proved of the most pernicious consequence when the supreme command devolved into other hands, who knew, like him, how to ingratiate themselves with the soldiery; but had not honesty enough to imitate his equity and moderation.

It may, with no less truth, be remarked, that these long wars weakened considerably the power of the nobility, through the diffidence and discord they created among them. As a great number of them did not serve in the army, those who did not only began to look upon themselves as more useful to the state than the others, but even to think they had the sole right to deliberate on matters of which the others knew nothing but through speculation. Thus the management of the army fell gradually under the direction of those who belonged to it.

This was attended with a circumstance very unfavourable to the nobility. The necessity of rewarding and encouraging valour often promoting to posts of great consequence individuals who were not of the class of nobles, these, not looking upon them as connected with themselves from interest, or equal in dignity, expressed a consciousness of their own superiority, and shewed a mistrust of the others, which highly offended them. Hence a shyness ensued, which was of great disservice to the nobility; as many of the best officers in the army were, thereby, driven into the opposite interest.

Another cause of the decrease of that influence the nobles had so long exerted, was their unwillingness to contribute towards the support of the public, as much as they were able. This Christian did not seldom complain of; and frequently was, in a manner, obliged to shame them into compliance, by the frankness and generosity of his own contributions: a method of proceeding entirely agreeable to the mildness he professed in all his inter-

course

course with his subjects; whom he studiously avoided to clash with, and rather chose to rule by persuasion, than to exasperate by any stretch of authority.

Thus, it is evident from a recapitulation of the events that preceded the famous revolution which put an end to the ancient constitution of Denmark, that this great change, though it might appear fudden and unpremeditated to many, was yet, in the nature of things, an almost neceffary consequence of what had gone before. Every thing feemed to portend it, in the apprehension of those who had penetration enough to look into the difpofitions of men at that period. The oppression, the insolence, and, what was still more fatal to them, the difunion of the nobility; the influence of the court over the two other orders in the state; and the discontents of these against the nobles; discontents which were the more to be dreaded as they were well founded, and as the clergy and the commons had taken, jointly, a firm resolution to bring them VOL. I. home

home to the nobility, as foon as they could find a proper opportunity.

This resolution was not, as in times past, a thing which the nobles had it in their power to flight and difregard. The feudal fystem, for the advancement of which these had laboured more strenuously than ever, fince the prodigious addition of wealth they had acquired at the reformation, had been vigorously opposed, and was now confiderably diminished. The increase of commerce and riches had produced the building and peopling of new towns; and the inhabitants, emboldened by their profperous fituation, felt themselves more able than ever to vindicate their rights, and to refift the incroachments of their superiors. The court, on the other hand, beheld these diffensions with a view to draw some profit out of them. Its weakness and want of the power it aimed at, arose from the excessive power of the nobility; which could only be depressed by exalting the clergy and commons. From this motive it gladly espoused their cause on all emergencies; as the only quarter from which

it could derive the help it needed to obtain the ends at which it was aspiring.

That auxiliary, however, which the court, with great reason, depended upon as much as on any of the former, was the army. Though composed, in a very great measure, of Danes, it had yet a fufficient proportion of strangers in it to form a very large party of itself: but had there been none but natives, the lower classes, of which the foldiery confisted, preserved so little respect for the nobles. and were so sensible of the injustice and arrogance of their proceedings against the clergy and the commons, that they were determined to stand by these, in case of any contest; and were equally defirous to fee the nobles humbled, and brought to think less contemptuously of their inferiors, and to treat them with more equity and deference than they had done hitherto.

In these sentiments they were fully seconded and abetted by their officers; most of whom, being persons who had no other dependence than their profession,

were, of consequence, devoted to meafures that would, if successful, prove so much for their interest. They knew the humiliation of the nobles could be compassed by violent means alone; and that the army only could be effectually inftrumental in the execution of fuch a defign: animated, therefore, by that ambitious, daring spirit which is natural to military men, they shewed, by their readiness to countenance the complaints of the commons, how willingly and how chearfully they would give them the most vigorous affistance, if required. Thus, at the time of this great revolution, all things conspired to accelerate it.

When Frederick III. ascended the throne, he found the dissensions among the disferent orders of his subjects running higher than ever. Though the ancient forms subsisted, he saw they were little respected by the generality; and that it would not prove a difficult matter to give the finishing blow to an edifice that had long been tottering, and that now rested upon very weak and crazy foundations. Besides the

objections he had, in common with his fubjects, to the exorbitant power of the nobles, he had fuch private causes to look upon them in an odious light, as are always uppermost in the mind of an ambitious prince. He could not forgive the intrigues they had set on foot in favour of his natural brother Waldemar, as already observed. It was principally on this account he bore them an irreconcileable hatred; and was fully determined to wreak his vengeance upon them, the moment he should find a plausible pretext, and a convenient occasion.

It was concerted between him and those who were deepest in his intimacy, to disposses the nobility of the power and authority it had obtained through a long course of prosperous usurpations, yielded to, partly from the weakness of the crown, and the necessity of the times, and partly from the inconsiderate deference which their exorbitant share of opulence procured them among the other orders of the realm.

The

The haughtiness and petulance of the nobles daily afforded sufficient handle to call them to account. But as men do not generally perceive all the advantages they possess, any more than they discover, at once, all their debility, the court thought proper to wait until through some glaring instances of impropriety and unwarrantableness in the behaviour of the nobles, such an opportunity should offer as would put the attempt of the project that was meditating beyond any doubt of succeeding.

The ministry of Frederick was composed of several very shrewd men, none of them savourable to the nobility, and most of them individuals who had raised themselves by those talents that slourish best in a court, artifice, time-serving, and intrigue. At the head of these was Gabel, in quality of prime minister of state. He was a man of obscure birth, but endowed with an uncommon share of acuteness and activity; and depending merely on his master's savour for his continuance

in power, was indefatigable in striving to raise the royal authority above all controul. Surrounded by a set of courtiers of this stamp, who were incessantly somenting, by their discourses and suggestions, his indignation against the nobles, it was not surprising the king should imbibe their ideas, and suffer himself to be guided by their advice.

In the mean time, there were not wanting accidents of various kinds, to further the enterprize the court had so zealously at heart. The infolence wherewith the nobles treated the commoner fort, was unsufferably notorious: neither often were they fometimes wholly guiltless of arrogance in their demeanour towards the king himself: one of them, in particular, had given him the most outrageous provocations. This was Ulefeldt, a nobleman of great parts, but of immoderate pride. He had been grand-marshal of the kingdom; and this post, which invested him with great influence and authority, had increased his natural haughtiness of temper to fuch a degree, that it became,

at last, intolerable to Frederick. The monarch, at length, conceived such an implacable aversion to him, that, in order to avoid the consequences of several accusations laid against him, and which were countenanced by the king, he thought it fafest to withdraw from Denmark. But this banishment did not put an end to the passionate and disrespectful opposition he had carried on against Frederick at home. The same spirit accompanied him abroad; and while he maintained a correspondence with all the disaffected in his own country, he laboured with all his might and capacity to raise up enemies every where against his sovereign. happily for him, he succeeded too well in this unnatural defign; but at the same time he was a principal instrument in bringing on the body of the nobles, of which he was a chief and leading member, a general odium and difreputation.

But that occurrence which of all others contributed most effectually to advance the designs of Frederick, was the war that sell out between Denmark and Sweden, sol-

lowed

lowed by the fiege of Copenhagen. Frederick, throughout the whole course of this calamitous war, gained uncommon honour by the courage he manifested on various occasions. But it was chiefly during that memorable fiege that he endeared himself inexpressibly to his people, by a behaviour full of the most heroic perseverance and magnanimity in the most terrible trials. His valour had rendered him the delight of the foldiery, and it was unfeignedly agreed, by all ranks, that his presence alone had been worth an army. It was certainly his noble conduct on this critical emergency, that laid the immediate foundation of all the subsequent changes. The eyes of the whole kingdom were now turned upon him, as a man no less entitled to the crown he wore by his actions, than by his birth. He was now more than king; he was become the preserver of his country. The greatness of the difficulties he had surmounted had called forth virtues and abilities which had lain dormant in him; and which, as it is usual in such cases, had not only procured

cured him the admiration he deserved, but had raised the expectation of the world, always ready to give credit for the future in favour of the past.

In this brilliant fituation stood Frederick, in consequence of his glorious deliverance of the realm from the hardships and struggles it had so deeply been involved in. The gratitude of the people rose in proportion to the distresses he had experienced in common with them: and as he had contributed fo largely to their defence and relief, in the day of danger, they imagined he was equally qualified to remedy the mischiefs that had been occasioned by the preceding calamities; and naturally enough flattered themselves that a prince who had displayed so many great and good qualities in adverfity, would make a proper use of the advantages arifing from a state of prosperity.

Thus, notwithstanding the war with Sweden reduced the affairs of Denmark to a very low ebb, yet it proved a source of great reputation and glory to Frederick; who, from that period, began to be looked

upon

upon in a more respectable light than ever, and to find himself at the head of much more power and influence than he could possibly have attained without the assistance of that event.

Immediately on the conclusion of the peace between Denmark and Sweden, the ministry of Frederick, encouraged by these motives, determined to commence their operations, in order to bring their fecret plan to maturity. They began by spreading reports injurious to the nobility; and by extolling the king's conduct during the war. The arguments of which the court made the most plausible use, were the length and procrastination which the nobles affected in their deliberations, before they could be brought to refolve upon active measures. To this tardiness, it was afferted, many of the past misfortunes were chiefly due; as they had feldom concurred with warmth and zeal in any determinations that could put it in the king's power effectually to oppose the enemies of the state. While the other orders were unanimous and chearful in their obedience

dience to the injunctions of their fovereign, and exerted themselves to the utmost of their abilities, the nobles were accused of constantly testifying an indecent reluctance in conforming to what had been agreed upon in the affembly of the states, and of manifesting, upon all occasions, a jealousy of the king, which was equally groundless and disrespectful, as he had never shewn the least figns of a temper inclined to tyrannize; but, on the contrary, seemed to take a particular pleafure in behaving to all men with condefcension and affability. Such a conduct was represented the more blameable and ungrateful in the nobles, as it was chiefly to the king's extraordinary valour and firmness the preservation of the capital was owing, and, with it, of the whole realm, consequently of all their estates and privileges. It was complained, in short, that the nobles seemed to look upon themselves alone as worthy of notice and respect, and to think they had a kind of right to cast an eye of contempt upon every class of the community beside, and

to view them in no other light than as vassals and dependents, whose duty it was to pay an implicit homage to the dictates of the nobility, and to be led blindly by their opinion in all affairs.

These surmises were industriously propagated throughout the whole nation, and kept up with the utmost artifice and affiduity by the emissaries of the court. Unfortunately for the nobles, these surmises were, in general, too well founded. and needed very little inforcement of words to fink deep into the minds of the multitude, who were daily witnesses to the truth of many. On the other hand, the nobility, confiding in their number and riches, and ignorant of the plot that was hatching against them, with the most amazing fecrecy, lulled themselves into a flate of fecurity, and imagined these complaints against them would subside, as many had done before. They even affected to express in their meetings a greater warmth than ever for the privileges annexed to their order, and to treat the

murmurs of the public with a contemptuous filence and neglect.

While the popular discontents were thus artfully fomented, it was, at the fame time, no less carefully suggested that the only remedy for the many calamities under which the kingdom laboured, would be that all subjects indiscriminately, from the highest to the lowest, should contribute to the fullest of their means and abilities, towards the alleviation of the national diffresses; and that, laying afide all odious and oppressive distinctions of rank and privilege, they should unanimously and generously assist, with all their might, in bearing the public burthens, and retrieving the affairs of their almost ruined country.

When the court imagined the dispofitions of the people were sufficiently prepared to give countenance and support to the designs in agitation, it was determined the states of the kingdom should be asfembled. They were summoned accordingly, and met at Copenhagen, in the be-

ginning

ginning of September, one thousand fix hundred and fixty.

At the opening of the states it was easy to perceive, from the temper in which the deputies that composed them appeared to be, and by the speeches of the leading men on both sides, that this general meeting of the nation would produce something very remarkable.

In the mean time, the clergy and the burghers, through whose means the defigns of the court were principally to be compassed, were tampered with in a clandestine manner: as, notwithstanding their concurrence was not doubted of, vet, the deeper the plan was laid, the more fecure it would prove; as the nobles, by being furprifed and taken unawares, would be less able to devise timely meafures to prevent it. In order, therefore, to proceed with the utmost caution, nothing was transacted that could lead to any discovery of what was projecting; but all was carried on by way of hints and infinuations. The chief ecclefiaftics and citizens were founded in a manner which,

which, though indirect, left them no ways in the dark as to what was wished and expected from them. The first point held out to their contemplation, was the expediency of testifying to the king the great fense which the public entertained of his deferts. It was proposed, as the only method of doing this with propriety, to fettle his rank and dignity on the same footing with that of all the neighbouring crowns, by making it perpetual and hereditary in his person and family: this being the least they could do, in return for the many indisputable proofs he had given of his affection and zeal for the welfare and glory of his country. It was maintained that fuch a change could, in no wife, be prejudicial to the freedom and independency of their nation. Their neighbours, the Swedes, had fet them the example, above a century ago, in the person of Gustavus Vasa; and had found no inconvenience arise from it to their liberties. On the contrary, they had never been freer, and had never prospered so much, either at home or abroad, as fince that

that period; which Denmark itself had found to its cost. England was adduced as another instance of hereditary royalty and freedom subfishing together in the fame government. No nation, it was faid, was happier, or made a more brilliant figure than the English; who were so thoroughly convinced of the utility of an hereditary fuccession of princes, that even when they had lately thrown off their allegiance to the family at present restored to its ancient rights, and had exalted an usurper on the throne, they were not fatisfied until they had instated him according to the old forms, and fettled the power and dignity he was invested with on his descendants. The precedent set up by fo wife and illustrious a people, was alledged to be a strong argument, in itfelf, of the propriety of such a measure. This was confirmed by observing that wherever the contrary practice prevailed, it was constantly attended with the most pernicious consequences. Without recurring any further, the kingdom of Poland was a glaring evidence of the many mif-Vol. I.

mischiefs to which elective monarchies were liable. Factions and heart-burnings, enmities and discords of all forts. being the deplorable and necessary effects of fuch ill-contrived constitutions. It was true, indeed, Denmark, though hitherto an elective monarchy, had been exempted from them; but that was owing merely to the good fense of the nation, in always continuing the fuccession in the same family. It was urged that this very circumstance alone made the crown, in reality, hereditary; and that, as it was but nominally elective, the fettlement of it on the king and his descendants would make no alteration in the nature of things; and could only be looked upon as a matter of mere compliment and ceremony; and ought rather to pass as a testimony of the gratitude and affection of the Danes for the person of their sovereign, than as any positive innovation in the constitution of the state. it was condenily attended - with

These arguments were certainly just and valid in the strongest degree: and had the intention been to have gone no fur-

further than to have rendered the crown hereditary, no harm could have enfued to any of the parties concerned. But the ultimate views of those who were at the bottom of the intrigue, were of another complexion. They knew that the proposing them, at once, would be the shortest method to frustrate them; as the nobility, fooner than fuffer fuch an event as downright despotism to take place, would certainly confent to forego a part of their privileges, rather than lose them all. They stopt, therefore, at this proposal; which, as it contained nothing prejudicial or alarming, could not be deemed criminal. If unsuccessful, it left them guiltless, in appearance, of any finister defign; if it proved acceptable to the public, it would readily pave the way for new concessions to the crown: nothing being more certain than that, when national affemblies are once brought into the humour of complying with any demand of great importance, they generally are led by degrees to grant much more than what T 2 feemed

feemed at first to be hoped or defired from

Another motive for concealing, as much as possible, the genuine design itself from the generality of the burghers and citizens, was the well-grounded apprehension of its meeting with their disapprobation. For upwards of a century past, trade had been increasing in Denmark, to the great benefit of the kingdom. As their contests with the Swedes had, in a great meafure, subfided fince the expulsion of the tyrant Christian II, they had employed the leifure of peace, at home and abroad, to look to the improvement of their domeffic concerns. The reformation which followed soon after in Denmark, brought into that country numbers of fuch as were profecuted for having embraced the new opinions. Many of these were people of property; and, what was of more advantageous confequence to the country that afforded them an afylum, were most of them engaged and well conversant in trade. From these refugees, who came

in large numbers, and whom the necessity of fubfilling forced to continue in their profession, the natives of Denmark imbibed a keener commercial spirit, and learned the art of carrying on a more lucrative business with their neighbours. In this they were powerfully affifted by fome very favourable events. Two of them deserve to be mentioned as of particular importance. The first was the decrease of the power and trade of the hanse towns. The second and principal was the erection of the seven United Provinces into a commonwealth, together with their long and obstinate war with Spain, whose yoke they had just shaken off. In order to maintain their independency they were obliged to have recourse to industry and commerce, the only supports remaining to a people who inhabited a very bad country, and who yet were determined to be free. This led them naturally to open an intercourse with fuch countries as could supply them with naval stores. Denmark, at that time in possession of the very best provinces in T 3 Swe-

Sweden, as well as of all Norway, was glad of an opportunity to fettle a correspondence between the respective merchants of both countries, that was to prove fo serviceable to their reciprocal interests. The affinity between James I. of England, and Christian IV. of Denmark, was no less of use in enlarging the commercial concerns of the Danes and the English, who were then beginning to emulate the Dutch in every branch of trade and navigation. From these two nations Denmark derived a fund of bufiness that made it flourish exceedingly. Several places, which had formerly been no more than small villages, were now grown into thriving towns. As the inhabitants of these, and of other cities which improved in proportion, increased, the number of fuch individuals as were most interested in maintaining public freedom, augmented; and was, at this period, grown fo confiderable as to excite the jealousy of the nobles; against whose undue influence their riches and confequence served often as no ineffectual balballance. Add to this the evident utility they were of on all public emergencies; the large sums they could raise for the service of the public; and the perpetual advances they had always shewn themselves ready to make on pressing occasions. These circumstances, together with the homage mankind is so inclined to pay to riches, gave them a weight which could not but be heavily selt in whatever scale they threw themselves.

Until the time we are now entering upon, the lenity of the government in Denmark, was chiefly derived from the moderation and wisdom of those who presided at court. As the crown was much limited in its legal authority, nothing arbitrary and tyrannical was dreaded from that quarter. The body of the nobility was the great ruling power, and could, at any time, exercise a controul, from which the crown itself was not exempt. In such a situation, it was natural for the trading interest to join with the weaker side, in order to form, by such a connexion, a sufficient barrier against the nobles.

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Copenhagen, and the principal cities of Denmark, abounded, at this time, with opulent burghers; many of whom had greatly fignalized themselves in the late war with Sweden, by their generosity in furnishing whatever they possessed for the desence and preservation of the state. Many also had, indeed, been great sufferers; and all of them unanimously thought it was incumbent on every member of the community to contribute, as they had done, to its relief; and that no class of men could reasonably plead a right of exemption from sharing in the distresses of the public.

Impelled by these motives, which were certainly just and laudable, they were loud in their clamours against the nobility; who were the greatest possessors, and least contributors in the whole kingdom. Their privileges in other respects were yet but little complained of. The only fault found was their restiveness in that particular. The universal cry was the immediate want of money for the indispensible exigencies of the state; and the injustice and barbarity

barity of the nobles, in refusing to act in common with their fellow-subjects for the alleviation of the public calamities.

At the head of this numerous and powerful body of men, were the burgh-mafters of Copenhagen. These were privately leagued with the ministry; who had gained them over, by great promifes to themselves, and great expectations in favour of the burghers. The chief of those burgh-masters was Hans Nansen, a person of a daring and violent temper, who longed to place himself on a parity with the nobles; with several of whom he had occasionally had very severe altercations. wherein his pride had been forely mortified. Animated with a spirit of resentment common to all men, but much more inveterate when they think themfelves aggrieved and infulted without cause, he now resolved to give his anger the fullest scope. The opportunity he looked for foon offered itself. As the station he filled of eldest burgh-master intitled him to a post of still greater dignity, that of prefiding in the affembly of the commons.

mons, he made the amplest use of the frequent occasions that fell in his way, to envenom the rancour subsisting between these and the nobles, by representing the latter as a body of men on whom no arguments could prevail; who were too tenacious of their selfish maxims to hearken to any remonstrances, however reasonable and respectful; and whom nothing could bring to any moderation and justice, in their conduct, but absolute compulsion.

This method of reasoning was inforced by a behaviour unusually resolute and audacious. The former humility that characterised the addresses of the commons to the nobility, was now intirely laid aside; and an air of equality was affectedly assumed, and boldly manifested in all their speeches and actions. This drew on, of course, no few ecclaircissements, wherein the nobles found a spirit of resistance and contrariety to all their proposals, and of desiance to their persons and rank, to which they had hitherto been strangers.

Struck with a novelty so alarming to their interest, and so offensive to their pride,

pride, the nobility foon found fomething more than ordinary was the fecret fpring that animated the commons to proceed to fuch lengths. The most fagacious among the nobles quickly discerned they were threatened in a more dangerous manner than ever; and that, instead of making fuch replies to the commons, as would only aggravate matters, it was more eligible to come into their views; and to divert the florm, by giving way to fuch of their requests as were founded on justness and propriety. They clearly perceived the commons themselves were but the instruments of a far more dreadful enemy. The court being undoubtedly the prime instigator of all these commotions against the nobility, in order to rife, through their destruction, to a greater degree of power than they had ever poffeffed themselves. They were, in short, persuaded it was but equitable the commons should be treated with more lenity than they had hitherto met with; and that it was more wife and adviseable to yield to their desires, than, by opposing them, to force that numerous body

body of men into the interest of the court; which would, as they all knew, readily embrace fo favourable an occasion to exalt itself to absolute sovereignty, on pretence of redreffing the grievances of the multitude, and restraining the too great authority of the pobles. They faw besides. that whether the commons had justice or not on their fide, was no longer the queftion. They had arms in their hands; were exasperated to the most violent degree; and were now the strongest party of the two. It was vain, therefore, to think of refifting them, either by open force, or by altercations in the affembly of the states, as they seemed firmly determined to hearken to nothing but a total compliance with their present demands, That these being altogether far from exorbitant, a fincere, unfeigned acquiefcence in them, might probably put an end to all further enmity, and bring about a reconciliation; which every wife and honest man must plainly discover was equally neceffary for both parties.

Such were the fentiments of the more enlightened and patriotic members of the nobility of Denmark, at this critical juncture. But the evil ftar of that nation prevailed against all sense and evidence. The majority were infatuated with a notion that the commons were only feized with a temporary fit of discontent; which would evaporate when they found the nobility invincibly resolved to oppose their pretensions. They alledged that, were they to yield to their clamours in one instance, there would be no end to their expostylations; and that, from concession to concession, the commons would extort from the nobles every privilege, every immunity, that made any difference between the two orders. They declared it would be shewing themselves unworthy of the rank and power they derived from their birth, to share the hereditary honours intailed on them by a long train of noble and valiant ancestors, in common with persons of mean parentage and ignoble professions: that, sooner than bow the neck to fuch ignominy, all ought to be

earnestly tried, and endeavoured to avert it. They afferted their strength and credit were not reduced to so low an ebb as to despair being able to maintain themfelves in their rights, against all attempts to infringe them: they still possessed among their body a number of brave and intrepid members, sufficient to inspire into the rest courage and fortitude to withstand all their enemies: that now therefore was the time to prove themselves superior to the wrath and malevolence of the commons; and, above harbouring any dread of them, by adopting fentiments worthy of their high quality, and by refifting with vigour and undauntedness the secret machinations of their hidden and the open efforts of their professed adversaries.

When we review the allegations of the two different parties that divided the body of the Danish nobility at this time, it must be confessed that, had the court itself dictated the arguments which led the majority to oppose the pacific measures of the few, it could not have suggested any more

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proper to add fewel to the fire of contention and animofity that was blazing with fuch fierceness between them and the commons. As these arguments breathed the very foul of pride and haughtiness, they were just the very thing the court defired; and ferved its purpose effectually, by rendering the rancour and hatred on each fide inextinguishable. Neither is it improbable that this spirit of arrogance and implacability was infused, in a great measure, by the partisans the court had among the nobility; who were convinced the furest method to prevent a reconciliation, was to urge this body of men to the most insulting and most desperate courses. By these the anger and indignation of the commons would be raifed to the highest pitch; and they would confequently become eager to follow the impulse of those who were appointed to lead them on to the extremities that were intended.dreamwan driw meat bonici . ace

Had all the nobles been firmly united, the court would have found it impracticable to carry its designs into execution.

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Had even those who agreed in opinion, acted with any degree of coherence and fortitude, the revolution which followed might have been partly prevented. But many of that body had long been devoted to the ministry: those who belonged to the military list, were, almost to a man, wholly submissive to the views of the court; and many who might have stood independent, were actuated by selfish prospects of ambition.

While the nobles were thus divided, and uncertain which way to proceed, the commons, on the contrary, were steady and unanimous. As they knew they would be well supported, whatever they they might resolve upon, they became thence more determined and fixed in their demands on the nobility. But what principally contributed to render them instexible, was the adherence of the whole order of the clergy; who, on this critical occa-fion, joined them with a warmth and cordiality that added new firmness and courage to their measures.

This body of men, not so considerable from its numbers, as from its policy, and particularly from the influence it necesfarily possesses over the minds of the majority of mankind, had, as already obferved, long entertained a fecret spite against the nobles; who had been chiefly instrumental in depriving them of their temporalities at the time of the reformation. Ever fince that transaction, the clergy had been reduced to a parity with the secondary orders of subjects; whereas, in antecedent ages, they had ranked with the first, and often above them. Stung with the thoughts of fo mortifying a change in their fituation, they had, from that time, embraced the interests of the commons; and had always proved the most dangerous opponents to the nobility. It was not furprizing, therefore, they should readily feize so favourable an opportunity of reinstating themselves, if not in their possessions, at least in a degree of credit not far inferiour to what they had formerly enjoyed. This was an object that equally gratified their vanity and revenge. The VOL. I.

The courtiers among them, that is to fav. fuch as held the few ecclefiaftical benefices of any consequence, that yet remained, and those who aspired at such preferments as the crown could confer upon them, did not fail to exert all their activity to promote the views of the court among their brethren. Hans Swan, a man of more intrigue than learning, was, at this time, the chief person of the whole ecclefiaftical order. He fill retained the title of bishop, though his authority was much restricted, and his revenues not very confiderable. He had influence enough to win the confent of the whole body, to submit to his guidance in the present posture of affairs. He gave them to understand that nothing would conduce so effectually to set them on a more respectable footing than they had latterly been, as to bring the nobles to comply with an alteration in the mode of government; of which they were too much masters to pay that respect to their profession with which all other classes of subjects treated it.

Very few arguments were sufficient to convince men who were already perfuaded they could lose nothing by an humiliation of the nobles. The truth was, that, in whatever point of view they confidered a project of this nature, it was clear they must prove gainers in the end: as the court would be obliged to keep on good terms with such as were, of absolute necessity, to be depended on, to impress the multitude with the propriety of acquiefcing in its present measures; and would always be found of the highest utility in forwarding its interests, and in preserving a spirit of fubmiffion and obedience throughout the whole kingdom.

Such was the fituation of all parties, at this memorable period. But, notwith-flanding the superiority of strength on the side of the court, though the greatest part of the nation concurred in wishing for many of the alterations proposed, and numbers were ready to second its designs, in their utmost latitude, yet, hesitation and dread of pushing matters to extremity, kept it in suspense. Some courtiers who

penetrated deeper than others into the various consequences of what was intended, clearly forefaw that a total change in the constitution would immediately deprive them of all real importance; as it would subject them entirely to the will and pleasure of the sovereign; who, though a prince of a very deferving character, might still alter in his disposition, and not always express the same regard and predilection for them as at present. That, in such a case, they might lose the fruits of their compliance with his defires; and possibly fall into disgrace, and find themfelves in a worse condition than ever from the boundless dependence wherein the project in agitation tended to involve all persons indiscriminately.

These reflections, which occurred to several who had appeared very warm and fanguine in the service of the court. threw a temporary damp on the vigour with which things had proceeded. The king was alarmed: he discovered a diffidence and tardiness in some whose rank and station intitled them to a nearer ap-

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proach of his person. He grew very cautious himself, and thought it necessary to use all manner of circumspection in an affair, the issue of which, if unfavourable to his views, might prove so fatal a source of uneasiness to him ever after.

In the midst of this uncertainty, which, had it long continued, might have overset the whole plan of the court, a person was found who had resolution enough to put an end to it, and to revive the ardour of Frederick and his adherents. This perfon was the queen: a woman endowed with a spirit and vigour of mind that rendered her capable of the most arduous and difficult affairs. She was a princess of the house of Lunenburg, and possessed the courage and magnanimity inherent in that illustrious family. She had, on many occasions, displayed a firmness above what is usual in her fex; and had borne a constant part in all the perplexities the king had met with, in a reign that had proved hitherto full of troubles and calamities. But nothing had done her more honour U 3 than

than her undauntedness on the approach of the Swedish army to invest Copenhagen. Frederick earnestly intreated her to withdraw to a place of fafety, and not expose herself to the certain danger that must infallibly attend her, was she to remain in a city no part of which could be exempt from peril: but she persisted unhaken in a determination not to leave him; and shared with him in the many toils and hazards he ran during that terrible fiege. Her behaviour on that memorable occasion, and the whole tenour of her conduct, in every instance that could ferve to manifest her great qualities, had not only endeared her extremely to her consort, but had established her reputation, both with him and with the whole court, and, indeed, throughout the kingdom, in so effectual a manner, that the was esteemed equally worthy and able to manage the most important concerns.

Actuated by the ambition of securing a crown to her posterity, she was deeply engaged in the intrigue that had been car-

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ried fo far; and very unwilling to relinquish hopes that bore so fair a prospect. As time was precious, and none was to be loft in making the most of the temper the generality of the lower orders of the realm were in, the faw the necessity of risking all at once; and of concurring with the warmth expressed with so much eagerness and violence by the commons. She faw that by temporizing, nothing could be gained, and all might be loft. Full of this conviction, the inflantly determined to come to an immediate decision; and the represented her fentiments to the king with fo much strength and vehemence, as to fix him in her own determinations.

In this manner, through the daring genius of a bold and high spirited woman, was the final blow given to the conftitution of a country where it had fubfifted upwards of a thousand years; and a total change projected and carried into execution, with much less difficulty than any of the parties concerned could ever have believed: no person imagining that either the one fide would have proceeded with with so much activity, or the other have yielded with so much supineness.

The remarkable conduct of this celelebrated princess reminds one of the no less intrepid and resolute behaviour of another, on an occasion at that time recent in the memory and admiration of all Europe, the famous revolution in Portugal, happened about twenty years which before that of Denmark. This important event was accomplished, in a great meafure, through the dexterity and courage of the duchess of Braganza; whose aspiring heroic spirit animated her wavering husband, and emboldened him to lay claim to and fet upon his head, the crown of that kingdom, wrested from his family by the injustice and violence of Philip II. of Spain, under the tyranny of which it had long remained.

The prodigious facility with which the defigns of the court succeeded, immediately after the resolution had been taken to accelerate them with all speed, was an evident proof of the sagacity and penetration of the queen. Heated by the discourses.

courses, and spurred on by the secret machinations of their leading members, the whole body of the commons and of the clergy unanimously agreed to lay before the house of nobles the sentiments they had adopted, relative to the change they thought necessary to be made in the difposal of the crown. This they affected to do in terms uncommonly expressive of the zeal and respect they entertained for the king's person. They very minutely set forth the various instances of courage and conduct he had exhibited in the defence of the kingdom, and particularly the fortitude and intrepidity he had displayed in the late fiege of Copenhagen; his care, his vigilance, his ardour for the good of his people, and for the preservation of the state on that critical occasion; how faithfully he had rewarded all who had deferved well of their country in that dreadful day of trial; what an important example he had shewn in the duties both of a geral and of a foldier; with how much firmness and prudence he had withstood all the efforts of his enemies; and with how

how much honour to himself, and glory to the kingdom, he had extricated it from the most terrible difficulties: the conclusion was, that in consequence of so many services rendered the public, and as a testimony of the gratitude of the whole nation, nothing less could be done than to settle the succession of the crown on the king's family and descendants.

Though nothing difrespectful to the nobles was contained in this declaration, yet it was drawn up in fuch a manner as to leave them no alternative. It was, in fact, a positive injunction to them to comply with the request proposed; and even went fo far as to fignify an expectation, that they would lay the intention of the other orders before the king in their prefence. This alarming declaration was figned by all the representatives of the clergy, and of the commons; and carried up with all expedition to the nobles. These could not but be greatly surprised that a resolution of so much importance should have past, without even deigning to ask their advice. This was a proceeding the more novel and audacious, as whatever related to matters of consequence in the government of the realm, had hitherto originated from them; and as, in all their consultations, the two other orders had always had a respectful eye to the opinions of the nobles, by whom, indeed, they were almost constantly directed.

By the manner in which this notification of the resolves of the clergy and commons was conducted, it was plain the fuffrage of the nobles would not be deemed necessary to render them valid; and that, whether they confented or not, the meafure would be carried, in despite of all opposition. But this was not the worst of the mischief the nobility had to expect. As they still remained refractory in the affair of taxes and contributions, and as the other orders were as tenacious of the judgment they had formed on that matter, the breach still continued between them; and was further widened by the bitterness and passion manifested on both sides. Things grew, at last, to so outrageous a height, that, in a conference held on that fatal subject,

sto insist they had an hereditary and constitutional right of being exempt from
taxes; and that the commons forgot their
own condition, if they pretended to be
any more than servants and vassals; adding, in a peremptory tone, they had better submit than dispute with the nobility,
who had always been, and were still resolved to be masters. This language so
exasperated the other orders, that they
broke up in the utmost rage, vowing never to meet the nobles any more, till they
had taken the sullest revenge on their
pride.

This fecession was the fignal of absolute irreconciliation between the nobility and the clergy and commons. As soon as these had pitched on a place where to continue their sessions apart, they began by deploring the despicable condition to which they were reduced by the intolerable haughtiness of the nobles; and the inexpressible contempt they were held in by that tyrannical body of men. They ought, indeed, said they, to thank themselves for the

many indignities they fuffered; as they were folely to be ascribed to their own want of spirit, in refusing to do themselves justice, while they had the means in their hands: were they to affert the natural right they had to better usage, the nobles durst not and were not able to deny them any equitable demands. The time, however, added they, was come to force these arrogant masters to lay down a power of which they had made fo unwarrantable a use; and to compel them to pay the same submission to the laws as other subjects. It was unanimously determined that the readiest way to effect this, would be to deprive them of the means of thwarting the just meafures the king had fo often proposed for the common welfare; but which they had fo frequently and wantonly defeated, from finister and partial motives. It was therefore agreed, that the king, who had ever shewn himself the real friend of his country, was much worthier of enjoying the fupreme authority than the nobility, who always confidered themselves as having a separate interest from that of the public.

It was observed, at the same time, that an aristocratical government was the worst of any, as the people of Denmark had but too long experienced. True it was, the states confisted of clergy and commons, as well as of nobles; but that the latter found means to ingross exclusively every post of dignity and importance. That even in the army, where valour and military skill ought to be the only road to preferment, the jealoufy of the nobles would not permit any but of their own body to rife above the rank of a captain, without taking the most invidious notice of it, and expressing the most supercilious displeafure; as if none but themselves were able and willing to serve their country. From these instances the commons inferred, it was vain to hope for any reformation in the conduct of the nobles, while they continued possessed of such excessive power. That they had too long exercised it equally to the oppression of king and people. The king they made it their study to thwart and over-rule: the people they burthened with all manner of imposts, refusing, at the same time, to furnish a proportionable contingent.

Neither did they forget to mention the behaviour of the nobles, during the late war. The fudden change in their conduct, when they thought the Swedes were on the point of carrying all before them: the affability, and condescension they affected to display, with all orders and conditions of men, with a view to gain their good-will and attachment, and to fecure their constancy and fidelity against the offers made by the enemy: the folemn affurances given to the citizens of Copenhagen, that they would treat them thenceforward on the footing of persons worthy of all honour and respect; promising they should enjoy their possessions under the fame tenure as the nobles themselves, and be liable to no taxes but in common with these: that now the danger was past, the various concessions which fear rather than a fense of their duty had extorted from them, in favour of the inferior classes, were buried in filence, and no longer thought of: but that if the nobles affected

fected to confign them to oblivion, the commons still remembered them, and knew where to apply to force them to keep their word, or at least to make them repent of their breach of promise.

After many complaints and invectives of this nature, the fum of their consultations was this, that they should immediately wait on the king in a body; and make him a tender, not only of an hereditary right to the crown of Denmark for his family, but also of an absolute, uncontroulable dominion over all ranks and degrees of his subjects. In this fatal determination there was not a voice diffentient in the whole affembly: to fuch a pitch of wrath and indignation had the haughtiness of the nobles excited them. Of these no further notice was taken than to load them with all manner of abuse. So far from deeming their concurrence necesfary, in a resolution which comprehended the whole realm and nation, they further determined that, in what they were about to transact, they would treat all opponents as enemies to their country; and.

and, if necessary, would compel, by open force, all men to submit to their meafures.

Among those who were principally instrumental in promoting these violent refolutions, were the prefident of the house of commons, and the chief person among the clergy. It may not be unworthy of notice that this latter, who styles himself bishop of Denmark in the declaration abovementioned, which is preferved with uncommon care among the archives of that kingdom, was shortly after decorated with the title of archbishop, besides a confiderable pecuniary gratification. former met also with a like reward, tho' not proportionable to that of his coadjutor: this person, as head of the whole ecclefiastical order, was, in consequence of this great change in the system of government, become an individual of much higher importance than the head of the laity; who, by the rash step they were induced to take, had debased themselves lower than ever.

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Certain it is the clergy acted, throughout the whole of this business, with a clear and perfect view of their own interests. While the nobility held that supremacy with which it had fo long been invested, they could entertain no hopes of being considered otherwise than in a degree of mediocrity. But they perceived very plainly, that if this great body once fell into infignificancy, as it would in all probability do, when deprived of it's former power, the importance of the clergy would be increased, by the diminution of that number of powerful subjects who eclipsed all other orders of men; to fay nothing of the favour the court would, in all likelihood, shew them, as members of a profession that could be rendered so ferviceable to its views,

As to the laity, it is inconceivable how fo many persons, not a few of whom must be supposed to have been men of sufficient sense and capacity to discern their own interests, should have been led away by so lamentable an infatuation. It has, indeed,

deed, been alledged, in extenuation of their conduct, that they could hardly be faid to be in their cool wits, when this unfortunate affair was resolved upon: that in the height of their refentment and fury, when they first withdrew from the place where they fat together with the nobles, either through chance, or possibly through the defign of those who thought the fooner to attain their ends by fuch means, they had indulged too freely in a refreshment, previous to their refuming the business; and had again entered upon it before they could be well enough fettled to act with proper temper. It were rash to affert that this anecdote is absolutely founded on truth: it owes, perhaps, its origin to a fong composed, probably, about that time, upon the occasion, and which feems to countenance fuch a report. This, however, is certain, that they committed a folly which could not have been exceeded, however remote they had been from fobriety.

After having thus, in the most solemn manner, resolved upon the ruin of the

nobility and their own, they sent to apprize the king of their transactions; and, in the mean time, agreed to wait once more upon the nobles, in order to inform them of what they had done; and to exact their immediate concurrence in accompanying them to court, and making a formal tender of absolute, hereditary power to the king. This step was no sooner proposed than taken; and the united bodies of the clergy and commons repaired instantly to the place where the nobles had assembled.

Though the nobility were not altogether ignorant the clergy and commons were intent on diminishing the authority they had so long possessed, yet they little imagined they could ever entertain any idea of abolishing it entirely; much less that they could ever prove so blind to their own welfare, as to devolve the whole authority of the state into the hands of the king. They were, therefore, inexpressibly surprised when they heard, from the mouth of the president of the commons himself, that such was the design they

they had taken; that it was irrevocable; that they would stand to it at all hazards; and that if the nobles refused to give their suffrages, their own should be sufficient.

A declaration of this kind was fuch a shock as none of the nobles expected; they were, in a manner, struck speechless; fince how to give any immediate answer was a thing of the most perplexing difficulty. In the mean while, the commons and clergy, equally conscious and proud of the superiority they now felt themselves possessed of, and of the woeful condition to which they had reduced the nobles, infifted on a direct and positive answer; and treated with the utmost contempt and indignation the respite which was sued for by the nobles, in 'order, as they faid, to take their proposal into consideration and discuss it with order and regularity.

There were not, indeed, wanting some among the chief commoners themselves, who were of opinion that, before they proceeded any further, it would be highly adviseable to secure to their own body a

proper charter of advantageous terms: which the king should be defired to fign, previously to his exaltation to absolute for vereignty. These terms were such as they flattered themselves he could not refuse, when he confidered the high price they paid for them. They confifted in the king's declaring all his fubjects equally free, and absolved from any such kind of servitude as amounted to flavery; in the redress of the grievances with which they had so long been oppressed, and which had furnished cause for so much discontent and complaint; and in the confirmation of the privileges and immunities promifed to them, during the fiege of Copenhagen.

These terms, which were sounded on the purest equity, might easily have been obtained, if the clergy and commons had shewn the least propensity to insist upon them. But, as they presumed the king would not scruple to grant them so reasonable a request, and imagined he would stand too much in need of their assistance to resule it, they were over-persuaded to depend on his word, and resolved to sur-

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render themselves without any shadow of composition on either side.

Singular, however, and unaccountable as this conduct may feem, it is observable that the famous restoration of the royal family, which happened in England precifely this very year, was attended with an almost equal degree of infatuation. Wearied with civil commotions that had lasted near twenty years, and had made the whole kingdom a scene of bloodshed and horror, the English nation was glad to be delivered from such miseries, at any rate. To this motive alone, can be ascribed the imprudent, precipitate re-establishment of Charles II. on the throne of his ancestors, without any previous stipulations in favour of liberty; notwithstanding it was evident, that the infringement of the people's privileges had been the fole cause of all the preceding calamities; and that, without some previous capitulation between the prince to be restored and his fubjects, no lasting tranquillity could reasonably be expected.

This unpardonable, absurd neglect in the Danish commons, may, indeed, be fairly ascribed to the warmth shewn by the members of the clergy. These were unspeakably impatient to come to a final conclusion; being fearful lest, by the delay that must necessarily ensue from the debating and drawing up of articles between the king and the house of commons, difficulties then unforeseen might arise, and throw some very material obstacles in the way of the grand project itself. They exerted, therefore, their utmost influence to frustrate the endeavours of those who wished well to the cause of the commons: and made use of every argument, and every expedient they could fuggest, to defeat this last attempt in favour of the public. Unhappily for their country, they fucceeded but too completely: in spite of reason and common fense, in spite of the duty they owed to their constituents, the commons were prevailed upon to part with every thing, without requiring the least fecurity for the ample promifes made to them. When

When the nobles found the commons were immoveably fixed in their determination, and that it was rather dangerous to oppose it openly, they pretended to acquiesce in it, so far as to approve of the measure itself, though not of the manner in which it had hitherto been conducted. They alledged a deed of fuch importance ought not to carry the least face of hurry and precipitation: to fuffer it therefore to pass unaccompanied with the usual forms, would invalidate it: that as the univerfal concurrence of all the states of the realm was necessary to give it a due weight and authority, without the fanction of their own body, which was the principal order in the kingdom, it could be of no force: they did not mean, however, to refuse their sanction; but to give it in a manner becoming themselves; to act otherways would-wear the appearance of compulsion; which the commons themselves knew must tend to prejudice the world against their own proceedings; and render them contrary both to law and equity, in the opinion of all impartial people.

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These reasonings, which at a season of calmness and tranquility would have been attended to, now availed nothing with the commons. They still persisted in their demands; and told the nobles, very bluntly, it was not in their power to deceive them by their false pretences to coolness and moderation: that they well knew they detested in their hearts what their mouths seemed to approve of; but it was too late to put off a measure which was the only one that could pacify those who wished well to the kingdom: that the nobility were conscious they could not hinder it any otherwise than by artifice and temporifing; but the commons were not to be imposed upon in such a manner, and therefore would admit of no delay on the part of the nobles: adding that their reign was now over; and the commons would take proper care it should return no more. They were going, concluded they, that very hour to lodge the fovereign power in hands which, they were fure, would use it much more for the general weal, than they or their ancestors had

had ever done. If the nobles chose to make a free gift of it, they might have had that honour jointly with the commons; but were egregiously mistaken, if they imagined it lay in their option to prevent the commons bestowing that present where they intended.

Notwithstanding the nobles were very sensible the commons threatened nothing but what they were fully able to perform, yet they were so struck with the indignity of yielding, at once, to demands that were both so cruel and absurd, that they could not be brought to consent to their proposals. Mean while, in order to gain as much time as possible, they still kept them in discourse; hoping, not without all reason, that, during the delay thereby produced, something might fall out to retard more effectually what the commons were so hot and eager to bring to a conclusion.

But these very soon grew tired of this conference with the nobles: and they who were entrusted with the management and guidance of them, were too fearful of allowing them any leisure for reslection, to

remain long inactive. Instead, therefore, of listening to the harangues of such of the nobility as had taken upon them to engage their attention, in order to lengthen their stay, they interrupted them abruptly, by declaring their patience was exhausted; and that, since the nobility did not seem inclined to share with them in the transaction they proposed, they would immediately accomplish it without their intervention.

This was, accordingly, performed forthwith. They departed in a body, and repaired to court; where, one may well suppose, they met with a most hearty and gracious reception. There, in a set speech, they made the king a solemn offer of hereditary, absolute power over all ranks and degrees of people in Denmark; promising him, at the same time, the assistance of their lives and fortunes, to establish him in that power, against all opposers. It was easy to perceive against whom the animosity of the commons had dictated this latter part of their speech. But the king was too wise to coincide with their

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rancour; and knew too well how dangerous it would be to encourage the commons to use that violence, and proceed to those terrible extremities they seemed inclined to do, and certainly would have done, had he shewn the least sign of concurrence. Besides, he plainly foresaw there would be no need of compulsion; and that the nobles would not attempt to prevent what they must be convinced would take place, in spite of all their efforts; which would be vain and fruitless, in a place where they were evidently at the mercy of the court, the army, and the two other orders of the state.

An affectation of mildness was therefore assumed: the commons and clergy
received thanks for the chearfulness and
considence with which they intrusted
themselves to the king; and were told
they should have no cause to repent of
what they had done. Great promises were
made of a righteous and equitable government: in short, they were loaded with
all those slattering assurances which cost
so little to a court, and make so ready an
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impression on men of warm dispositions and of weak intellects. But still a clause was added, which, though it tended in appearance to maintain tranquillity between these two orders, and that of the nobles, yet gave the latter fully to understand they would do well to make a merit of necessity; and not provoke those in whose power they were, by delays that would only prove detrimental to themselves. The purport of this clause was, that the king could not accept their offer without the concurrence of the house of nobles.

The nobles, on the other hand, though equally chagrined and perplexed at this daring, outrageous behaviour of the commons, still preserved coolness and temper enough to consult together what remedy to provide against an evil so unforeseen, and pregnant with such terrible consequences. They now saw how wisely those among them had argued, who had counselled them, at the commencement of the dispute, to relax from their privileges for the sake of preserving the peace of the king-

kingdom, and the better to secure their own authority. They no less perceived it was now too late to offer that fatisfaction to the commons; who, after the inconfiderate step they had just taken, could not be supposed capable of hearkening to any terms of moderation. They knew the court too experimentally to expect it would enter into any favourable accommodation while it could avoid it: and yet this appeared the only way left them to extricate themselves out of their present difficulties. They could not but be fatiffied there were feveral among the courtiers, who, though devoted to the ministry, would not gladly see its power increased beyond all manner of controul. the chief ministers themselves knew their authority and credit at court was but temporary and precarious, even under a limited monarchy; but that if the crown was once lifted above all apprehensions of meeting with any fet opposition, and invested with an unlimited arbitrary sway, fubject to no check from any order of men in the state, their importance, however great in appearance, would be little in reality; or rather, indeed, be reduced to nothing, from the flavish situation under which they would find themselves, in common with the meanest of their fellow subjects.

Previous to this measure, which now appeared the only one left them, another of much greater expediency had been proposed. It was to withdraw themselves immediately from Copenhagen; and retire to their feats and estates in the country; where they would be at liberty to cast about them for means to obviate the defigns of their enemies. But this measure was fuggested on the eve of that fatal day; and it was now too late to think of carrying it into execution. The court, whose policy throughout the whole of this great business, was keen and vigilant to the greatest degree, had already taken all the necessary precautions to frustrate every intention of this nature. Not only the gates of the city were befet with foldiers, but every private passage and outlet was anxiously guarded; and even the very perfons

fons of the nobles were narrowly watched. Herein the court acted with great prudence. Had the nobles, instead of being cooped up and imprisoned, as it were, in Copenhagen, found themselves at large, and free from those terrors of unavoidable destruction, if they attempted any refistance, which over-awe the most resolute, the king would never have compassed his defigns, without a very violent struggle on the fide of the nobility; if, indeed, he had entirely succeeded in them. But this is a thing by no means probable, confidering the great power and riches of the nobles, throughout the whole extent of the kingdom; to fay nothing of the affistance they might have received from abroad: a furmife not altogether void of foundation, when we reflect on the readiness with which all pretexts are seized by watchful and potent neighbours, to intermeddle in the affairs of such states as are divided, at home, by factions and parties, in order to weaken their power by fomenting their disunion. Examples of this kind were not wanting in the reigns of VOL. I.

of former kings of Denmark; and the nobles had before them very successful precedents to engage and animate them to withstand the enterprizes of the court.

But, had the nobility met with no countenance, from abroad, still they were formidable enough at home, to maintain a very long and very obstinate refistance. Exclusive of their opulence, which alone was greater than that of all the other orders of the state together, they possessed a prodigious influence over a very confiderable part of the country people; with whom their authority, though often heavy and oppressive, was, nevertheless, settled by a long habit of obedience, from father to fon, through many fuccessive generations. This obedience, too, was, in many respects, rendered less burthensome. by those frequent instances of protection, on one fide, and consequent attachment, on the other, that naturally subfift between hereditary masters and hereditary vaffals; and contribute fo powerfully to alleviate, and almost to obliterate, the fense of such a condition. Nothing shews this

this in a stronger light, than the reciprocal affection that fo long sublifted in Scotland, between the clans and their chieftains: an affection that is far from being eradicated by the changes which the wisdom of the British legislature has thought it adviseable to introduce, in the customs, manners, and even apparel of the northern inhabitants of our island. This attachment, between the great families, and those who dwelt upon, and cultivated their lands, was, in former times, not less manifested in England itfelf; and was the real cause of the length and obstinacy of those wars that take up fo large a part of our history. The country people of Denmark, at this period of the revolution, were in a fituation nearly fimilar. They who were at the head of the schemes in agitation, knew it well; and, therefore, acted very advisedly in cutting off this resource from the nobility.

Notwithstanding the enmity this body of men was held in by the army, the clergy, and the citizens of Copenhagen, yet there were many among the Y 2 burghers

burghers of the other towns, in the neighbourhood of which the nobles chiefly dwelt and spent their income, who could hardly be looked upon as equally inveterate. A junction of these with the vasfals of the nobility was also very much apprehended. Could the nobles have found means to escape out of Copenhagen, and arm in their own defence, it is not improbable that, by laying before the public, and depicting in their proper colours, the absurdity and wickedness of the resolution the clergy and the commons had adopted, in devolving all the rights and authority of the kingdom upon the crown, many, if not most of the inhabitants of the country towns would have opened their eyes to their interest, time enough to have preserved themselves from that total destruction of all kind of liberty, which was the fequel of the rash step of the clergy and commons.

True it is the court had no reason to apprehend a desection either in the army or in the capital. But neither of these helps were so mighty as to prove absolutely

Intely decifive in its favour. The war which had just preceded, had filled Denmark with excellent foldiers. As it had been carried on by the Swedes in every part of the kingdom, all people had been obliged to take up arms; and were, confequently, become acquainted with and expert, more or less, in military operations. The country people, especially, who, from their fituation, were more open and exposed to the incursions and depredations of the enemy, had of course profited most in this fatal school. Hence. in case of a civil war, their friendship and affiftance would undoubtedly have proved of very great importance and efficacy.

The nobles certainly would have found it no difficult task to have secured a large party among this class of people; partly, as observed, from the habit of long subjection; partly by putting on a more engaging and affable behaviour, and by entering into compacts more advantageous to them, and verifying the sincerity of their promises and agreements, by some immediate benefits and concessions in

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their behalf. The celerity and anxioufness with which the court bestirred itself. to prevent the nobles from leaving Copenhagen, shews how fensible it was of the troubles and difficulties it would infallibly have had to encounter, if they had been suffered to avail themselves of these resources. It is amazing they did not, on the first suspicion of what might happen to them, instantly agree to withdraw from a spot where they certainly knew there was no safety for them, in case the court, clergy, commons, and army were unanimous against them. But it is still more astonishing that they should not have discovered sooner the plot that was hatching against them.

It was, however, now become impracticable to effect an escape from the place they were at present almost all of them collected in. A few, indeed, more provident than the rest, had, the night before, secretly lest Copenhagen; not without endeavouring to prevail with the others to do the same. But, whether they apprehended matters were not quite in so des-

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perate a fituation; whether they were ashamed to seem dismayed; and were of opinion such a slight would both disgrace and prejudice their cause; whether they were persuaded by the secret abettors of the court, that their stay would be accompanied by no manner of danger; or whether they were, in sact, asraid to withdraw, lest the noise and stir attending such a departure, might bring them into immediate danger, they thought proper to remain on the spot and wait the event.

But, whatever their firmness and resolution might have been when they came to this conclusion, it greatly abated the next day, when they saw themselves at the mercy of their enemies, and every minute liable to experience the most terrible treatment from their hands. This was an event which they were in no manner prepared to oppose. But what chiefly contributed to perplex and consound them, the court had sound means to sow such violent suspicions among them, that they hardly durst place the least considence in each other.

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To increase the terror and confusion they were in, every instrument was follicitoufly employed that policy and cunning could devise. The clamours of the mob were encouraged; the insolence of the foldiery was countenanced. When the clergy and the commons, after their fecesfion from the nobles, had agreed to deliver up the absolute dominion of the realm to the king, and were coming to notify their resolution to the nobles, the whole populace of Copenhagen attended them with shouts and applauses, that testified how heartily they espoused their cause; while the lower classes of the military were no less obstreperous on the occasion. The same happened again, when the clergy and commons, in defiance of the nobility. repaired to court, and, in contempt of their refusal to concur with them, executed that fatal determination. In short, there was no method left untried to throw them into all manner of apprehensions, not only concerning their power and privileges, but even for the safety of their persons.

It is not, therefore, surprising that, terrified at the many dangers they were furrounded with, and uncertain what their fate might be in a fortified city, of which the garrison and inhabitants were at the devotion of their avowed enemies, they should at last remit of their haughtiness and obstinacy; and condescend to make overtures of a more submissive nature than their pride had hitherto permitted. Preffed by these motives, they endeavoured to compound, if possible, with the court, as the only expedient remaining to be tried. Though little probability appeared of their meeting with any fuccess, yet, as people who feel themselves at the point of death, will fometimes indulge in the smallest glimmerings of hope, they still would not give themselves up to a total despair of accommodating matters; but refolved to make one more effort, in order to compromise all disputes, and reconcile themselves with the court, and with the other orders of the state.

But the court felt its power too efficaciously to give ear to their proposal; which amounted amounted to no more than an hereditary fettlement of the crown in the king's family. No extension of the regal power was mentioned, or none that was satisfactory. Besides, had they made as ample offers as the clergy and commons themselves, the court was so elated, that these offers would have been received no otherwise than as coming from persons who had nothing in their power either to grant or to resuse; and, consequently, deserved no thanks or notice, as they acted merely from compulsion.

As it was necessary, however, for the fake of formality to obtain their concurrence; and as the court foresaw that nothing but the dread of being treated with the most unfeeling severity could prevail upon them to give their consent to the resolution taken by the commons, it immediately resolved to act in such a manner as to throw them into the utmost consternation; and to deprive them at once of all ideas of attempting any further opposition.

When the nobles made the fruitless endeavour just mentioned, they entertained a notion, notwithstanding the perilous situation they were in, that a sense and consideration of their dignity and importance still remained; and did not therefore imagine it was necessary to come into an implicit compliance with the will of the clergy and commons. This it was that kept up their courage so far as to induce them to lay before the king such terms as shewed they still thought a reasonable accommodation might be obtained.

Neither did they, on receiving the king's refusal to hearken to their proposals, seem to despond so much as to give up all hopes: they remained awhile in consultation; and many were the measures propounded and debated. No conclusion, however, was formed; no plan of acting adopted: so that after a long and tedious investigation of what was sittest to be done, on so critical and pressing an emergency, they were obliged, for want of agreement and unanimity in their opinions, to put off the

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final fettlement of this great and important business to another meeting.

In the mean time, the court was meditating how to strike the projected blow in the most effectual and most decisive manner. As nothing falls with a more heavy and irresistible weight than what is sudden, and invades the mind when intent on things of a quite contrary nature, the resolution was taken to surprise the nobles, with a thorough conviction of their being in the most dreadful and most imminent danger of becoming an instant sacrifice to their enemies, while their attention should be fixed on objects as remote as possible from such fears, and wholly occupied in scenes of an opposite cast.

This project was accordingly carried on with the utmost judiciousness; and produced an effect completely adequate to what was wished and expected. After the nobles had broken up their assembly, they adjourned to the house of a deceased nobleman; whose funeral had long been deferred, in order to celebrate it with the

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more grandeur and folemnity at the time the states of the realm were to meet. As it is usual in Denmark on such occasions. to begin the ceremony by a fumptuous treat, the nobles had, of course, been invited; and were feated at table; when, conformably to the fecret orders of the court, news was brought to the company the gates of the city were that instant shutting; that guards were placed at every avenue; and that the whole garrison had received intimation to hold themselves in readiness at a moment's warning. This news was ushered in with every circumflance tending to raife the most terrible alarm. The time, the place, the person employed on that errand, who was an officer of rank; and who, by his cold, difdainful behaviour, shewed what little account was made of them.

The nobles were, in a manner, thunderftruck at these dismal tidings. Then it was they fully discovered the wretchedness of their condition: they were not able to dissemble their apprehensions: their courage was so much sunk, that they lost

all that presence of mind which was the only refuge left to support them; and which, had they retained it, might, perhaps, have flood them in no inconfiderable stead: such, at least, was the opinion of the most judicious and knowing people at that time. But, instead of recollecting themselves, and viewing with coolness and intrepidity the event that had befallen them; instead of directly confulting in a body how to demean themfelves, they gave up all thought and reflection; and abandoned themselves to an ignominious despair. A panic terror feized the whole body; their looks, their gestures, their discourse, betrayed the utmost dismay and confusion. Nothing remained of that haughtiness which had so long characterised them. They seemed to think themselves devoted to immediate destruction: and were overwhelmed in that perfuasion to such a degree, that nothing else employed their considerations. Notwithstanding the officer who had been charged to deliver the above alarming message, assured them no cruelty was defigned,

figned, yet the possibility of a repetition of what had so often happened, on similar occasions, strongly occurred to their minds. The dreadful precedent, in particular, of what was transacted at Stockholm in the foregoing century, was now recalled; and it remained to be known, whether Frederick intended to treat the Danish nobility, as the barbarous Christian had formerly treated the unhappy nobles of Sweden.

In the midst of these horrible agitations, the great and main point still lay undecided. The nobility, affrighted and driven to the most mortifying extremities, had not acquiesced in those demands to force them into a compliance with which thefe terrifying measures had been used. It was not, however, through obstinacy their concurrence was now with-held: through that perturbation of mind but that naturally accompanies a violent and dreadful furprize. This deprived them for a while of the power of coming to any determination. But, as foon as they had recovered from their disorder, they

they gave, without the least hesitation, into what was expected would prove the consequence of the sears they were under. They immediately sent the amplest notification to the court, of their readiness to submit to whatever should be demanded of them. This was done without specifying the motives that engaged their compliance; without expostulating about any conditions; and without entering into any particulars: they had totally lost sight of their pretensions and privileges; and were now content to subscribe to any thing for the sake of preserving their lives and fortunes.

In this manner were the nobles of Denmark, from possessing the highest consideration in the realm, reduced, in a moment to the most abject condition that could await men of birth, rank, and sentiments. They saw themselves degraded from the summit of power; and sunk from a state of freedom into dependence and slavery. But what most deserves notice in this celebrated event, was the quickness with which this change of condition dition was effected; not only in their circumstances, but even in their very minds. Less than the space of a day was sufficient to bring about this amazing alteration. On that which preceded the fatal one of their ruin, nothing was seen but spirit and resolution. When they spoke to the clergy and commons, they did it in the stile of lords and masters, who deemed themselves above all controul; and who thought themfelves alone able and qualified to prescribe laws to the whole nation. The clergy and commons were treated as a body of men unworthy of sharing the same rights with themselves; and were told, in the plainest terms, they were the vassals and flaves of the nobility. In short, their whole conduct was attended with the most insupportable arrogance. They could hardly find expressions lofty enough to manifest the sense they entertained of their own dignity and importance; nor devise words and epithets fufficiently low to mark the mean opinion they held of the commons. But before the close of the following day, all was inconceivably reverfed. Vol. I. It 7

It was now the turn of the clergy and the commons to exult in the depression of their late rulers. This they did in a manner that fully proved how ignorant they were of what they had done and were doing. The most senseles and stupid joy prevailed in Copenhagen, among the lower orders; as if the downfal of the nobility were to prove the æra of public selicity; and as if, instead of contributing to amend the situation of the public, it had not, on the contrary, been the prelude to the total annihilation of all kind of liberty whatever.

What evinces, beyond doubt, the infatuation of the enemies to the nobility, is that, as foon as the court had carried it's point so far as to extort a compliance from these, all other objects fell to the ground; and were no longer attended to, as matters of any weighty concern. The great things that had been promised to the citizens and burghers, seemed wholly forgotten; or, at least, the performance of them was protracted in a manner that made it palpable, to all discerning people,

that they would never take place. Previous to the donation of absolute dominion to the crown, and while the clergy and commons were yet but entering on the confideration of it, the king had openly promised, the first use he would make of the supreme power should be to declare every man in his kingdom free, and thenceforth released from the tyrannical bondage in which fo many of them were held. A confirmation of all the immunities obtained by the inhabitants of Copenhagen, was also another condition firongly relied upon; as well as the completest and speediest redress of the public grievances; a large catalogue of which was enumerated by the commons, and complained of as a burden too intolerable to be any longer borne. But all the affurances of which the court had been for lavish, seemed to disappear the moment it faw itself released from the apprehensions of meeting with any further opposition from the nobles. As foon as it perceived that body of men unable to make any further stand, it treated them as a vic-7, 2 torious

torious general does those parts of a routed army from which he met the most formidable resistance, pursuing them so closely as to afford them no time to rally, and taking no respite, until they are entirely and irretrievably defeated.

Full of this ardour, and eager to improve the advantages they had gained, the heads of the court lost no time in raising a superstructure on the foundation which the rashness of the commons, and the timidity of the nobles, had laid. Instead of performing what they had promifed to the former, their intrigues were now employed in impressing them with a belief that it was immediately necessary, for the joint interest of the court and the commons, to finish the work they had so prosperoufly begun, by calling in the affiftance of order and formality to give a fanction to their proceedings. After which, they would be at liberty to adjust all things according to their mutual defires; and to cement the union between them by whatever could render it beneficial to either party.

In consequence of this arrangement between the court and the commons, thefe viewed with the highest satisfaction, the further steps taken by the court, to perfect the system of despotism that was preparing for the whole nation. As it was notorious in what a lawless tyrannical manner the nobility had been compelled to give their affent to the iniquitous transactions the court was fo plainly at the bottom of, it was apprehended, that as foon as they found themselves delivered from the restraint they were under, the nobles might think proper to protest against the violence they had fuffered; and hold themfelves at liberty to reverse and disannul whatever they had submitted to through mere force: in order, therefore, to obviate all future measures of this fort, as far as lay in its power, the court, after confidering the matter with all attention, resolved to oblige every nobleman to pay an open, folemn homage to the king in person; and to bind himself by oath, to remain true and faithful in the support of the prefent change of government. This was,

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indeed, the only expedient that could be fuggested in favour of the crown : whatever else could be done had been already performed; and any more coercive measures appeared rather dangerous. As the intention of the court could not be to destroy the nobles, but only to keep them in subjection, it could go no further than to fecure their consciences, so far as such a thing was practicable in the present conjucture; and after having accomplished that, the rest was of course to depend on its own care and vigilance; which, it must be conscious, could never be too great in circumcumstances so very critical. Having, however, begun fo very fuccessfully, there were many reasons to be satisfied that, by continuing to act with the like policy, things would end in the same manner.

Having thus fettled among themselves in what method to proceed, it remained still to keep the nobles in that humility and dejection of temper, which was absolutely requisite to carry the matter to a complete issue. Nothing could better effect this purpose than to continue the

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plan fo well executed hitherto, of terrifyfying them by the most alarming shew of what was preparing for them, in case of refractoriness. Conformably to this, the gates of the city were still kept shut, and no person suffered to go in or out, without a special permission from the commanding officer at each gate. The major part of the garrison was almost constantly under arms, as if the place was besieged, and in hourly expectation of an affault. Perpetual messages were passing and repassing, between the court and the commons; and an affected appearance of hurry and folicitude was every where maintained. All this was contrived to be done. as much as possible, within the fight and nearest observation of the nobles; who were made the witnesses of all these bustling scenes, with no other intent than to perfuade them how refolutely the court and the commons were determined to act with a high hand, in the pursuit of their defigns; and how dangerous it would be to show the least backwardness in acceding to them.

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This method of proceeding had the defired effect. The nobles still continued under the same abject despondency that first seized them in that unfortunate hour. when they were frightened in fo sudden a manner into an instant compliance, thro' the dread of an immediate massacre. Notwithstanding the lapse of several days, between that and the time when the court thought proper to terminate things in a more open and formal way, the whole body of the nobility behaved with fo much submissiveness and fervility, as to become an object of contempt and derision, rather than of any consequence or apprehension. One would have thought they had all their lives been accustomed to the most passive subserviency, not only to the pleasure of the court, but even to the will and inclination of the commons. Whatever these judged it necessary to propose was without delay agreed to. They seemed now to have changed places with their former dictators; and to have arrogated the same influence and authority, from the superciliousness of their conduct, and the superior

rior tone with which they now issued their mandates to the dispirited and heartless nobility.

And yet, notwithstanding the distressful fituation these were in, the remembrance of what they had been, still in fome degree counterbalanced in the minds of their enemies the contemptibility of their conduct. Had not this been the case, the space of one day would have sufficed to have brought the plan of operations against them to a final iffue. But the truth was, the court waited in expectation of fome motions on the part of the nobility; and did not imagine their faculties were fo irrecoverably benumbed, as that they would fit still, and fuffer themselves to be stripped, in a manner, of their all, without uttering a word in their own behalf. Such, however, was the fenfeless dejectedness of this unhappy body of men, that they conducted themselves as if they had been totally unconcerned in what was transacting. The court, the clergy, the commons were, in fact, the only actors; and might, indeed, had they known their

own strength, have pushed matters to a still greater extremity; though, it must be confessed, they carried them far enough; and made use of the opportunity to the fullest extent they thought themselves able to do with safety.

As the nobility manifested so much pasfiveness, and such an ignominious filence upon all that was transacted, the court refolved to delay no longer the completion of a scheme that seemed so easy to be executed. The time, the place was therefore fixed upon to receive the oath of allegiance. In order to render the closing fcene more striking and awful, every circumstance was pre-concerted which the spirit of domineering could suggest. Instead of confining the performance of this ceremony within the walls of the palace, it was refolved to transfer it to a large fpot of ground; where, instead of the court and its attendants, all the inhabitants of Copenhagen, and, in a manner, the whole kingdom of Denmark, might be witnesses of the transaction. Accordingly, a royal throne was erected on a fcaf-

fcaffolding; whither the whole body of the nobility were formally fummoned to pay their folemn homage, and fwear fidelity to the king. This they were obliged to do, on their knees, in presence of the army, and the burghers of Copenhagen: who were all under arms, and furrounded them on every fide. In this fituation. which was the greatest novelty that had appeared in Denmark during the course of many ages, they were directed to pronounce aloud, in the hearing of the whole multitude, an authentic declaration and promise of implicit loyalty and obedience to the king, in all his commands : and an entire submission to the crown. without referve; further binding themfelves to the punctual execution of all this. by an acknowledgment of an hereditary obligation in themselves and in their posterity.

Such was the sense and purport of this famous oath; framed with a view of enflaving their minds and consciences, after having so unwarrantably secured their persons. Not one of them was exempted

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from going through this formal acknowledgment of servitude. Even such whom sickness might have excused, were industriously sought after, and brought to the fatal spot; where, like fellow-sufferers at the place of execution, they underwent the yoke in common with the rest.

But not content with these solemn declarations, the court had prepared a further tie; such as, perhaps, would be thought more binding and more efficacious in the eye and in the letter of the law; if it should ever become necessary to inforce it relatively to the present case. This was a subscription, under their hands, to a bond of the same tenour as what they had already fworn to. They were all constrained to subscribe this authentic document of their difgrace; which was to perpetuate to future generations the knowledge of this infamous and tyrannical transaction; and to serve, at the same time, as a deed and record to appear against them, if ever they should be so powerfully moved by shame and remorfe, as to endeavour at a change of the condition

dition to which their ill-conduct had reduced them.

In the midst of this pusillanimous behaviour of the nobles, truth and juftice require the name of a man should not be forgotten, who was the only one that had the courage openly to express his difapprobation of what was doing. He had even the resolution to fignify it to the king himself. The name of this brave man was Gersdorf. He was a person of great parts, and had shewn uncommon dexterity and fortitude in feveral negociations; principally those which were carried on with the ministers of Charles X. of Sweden, during the last wars. His spirit and intrepidity were well known; and had been conspicuous, on many occafions, highly to his own honour and to the advantage of his country. But this fingle instance of it, on this remarkable day, will certainly do him more credit with posterity than any other. In the capacity wherein he had appeared before, he had the countenance of his king and country; and acted with a consciousness

of representing the power and dignity of a nation. But now he acted alone, and had no support to rely on but himself. He had every danger to face, and no protection to look for, but from the admiration and respect which were due to his magnanimity.

After this memorable revolution had been perfectly completed, and every obfacle that stood in its way was totally removed, it now became an object of popular expectation and curiosity, in what manner the court proposed to comply with the promises it had made to the public; how it would henceforth treat the nobility, and the other orders of the state; and, in short, how it would enjoy and exercise its new acquired power.

The clergy and the commons flattered themselves with all kind of indulgence. These latter made no doubt the king would, according to the affurances he had so loudly, and so repeatedly given, put an end to all the vexations they had so long complained of; and place them on such a footing as should make them fully sensible

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what a beneficial change had been wrought in their condition.

But the necessity the court stood in, of being strongly supported in its new elevation, led it to pay its principal attention to, and fecure chiefly the adherence of those who were most able and inclined to fecond its views, and act in its defence, in case of need. The ecclesiastical order had fignalized itself so remarkably in the great business just concluded, and had displayed fuch particular warmth and dexterity in bringing it about, that the court, equally convinced of its devotion to the royal interest, and of its influence over the majority of people, determined, preferably to other confiderations, to infure the attachment of fo useful a body of individuals by every concession and favour confistent with their profession and expectations.

The fagacity of the court, in this rerespect, was amply rewarded by the zeal and activity the clergy continued to exert in its service. They made its cause so truly their own, that no subjects in Denmark mark have ever proved more faithful and diligent in maintaining its authority, and its claims, to the utmost extent of their abilities.

While the clergy was commissioned to teach and enforce unlimited obedience to the royal will, by dint of argument and persuasion, a still more effectual and formidable assistant was added to them. This was a large body of standing forces in the sole dependence and disposal of the crown.

In order, at the same time, to have the soldiery more completely at command, the ministry of Frederic set itself on various pretences to new model the army. As many of the natives were dismissed, and of foreigners retained, as could conveniently and prudently be done: the latter being chiefly to be trusted for their readiness to carry orders into execution, without questioning the justice, or the propriety of the measures they were employed to support.

Thus ecclesiastical influence on the one hand, and military violence on the other, became the instruments of authority which

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the court of Denmark, by the principles of the newly established constitution, was henceforth necessitated to rely upon.

Having, in this manner, chosen the clergy and the army, as the two main pillars on which the edifice of regal power was to be erected, it was natural they should be treated with a predilection proportionable to the importance they had acquired. The most gracious regard was accordingly shewn to their persons, and they were honoured with more peculiar proofs of considence and distinction than any other class of society.

In the mean time, the body of the commons, who certainly deserved as much from the crown as either the clergy or the army, and who had an ample list of demands to lay before the throne, began to consider in what manner the obtaining of them could be effected. But it was not long before they discovered they had no reason to promise themselves any expeditious decision on these points. Their demands, though highly reasonable, and consisting of nothing more than what they Vol. I. A a had

had the clearest right to, became now a matter of knotty deliberations; and difficulties of various kinds were started, in order to postpone the settlement of them. According to the king's repeated affurances. all his subjects, without exception, expected to have been declared free; and liable to no other jurifdiction than that of the laws. This was with great reason confidered as the undoubted right and just claim of all classes indiscriminately. The burghers of Copenhagen, in particular, looked for the ratification of those privileges which both the court and the nobility had promised to them during the last wars with Sweden: in the hope and prospect of which, they had opened their purses so freely; and had endured so many hardships and calamities in defence of the flate.

The king found himself beset with disficulties of all sorts. The redressing of grievances was an indispensible article; and, independently of his promise, it behoved him to effect it, without hesitation, as far as it was practicable; lest a handle might might be made of his delay by the difcontented part of the nation. On the other hand, many of these grievances were of fuch a nature that time only, and more fortunate opportunities, could contribute to redress them. As they were the confequences of a very fierce and destructive war, nothing but a reasonable duration of peace could bring effectual relief. It being, however, necessary that fomething should be done to keep the people in good humour, several declarations went forth: wherein, after acknowledging how much the crown was indebted to the fidelity and steadiness of the commons, for enabling it to complete the fettlement of the kingdom on a right foundation, still the impossibility of adjusting all matters, in such wife as to give immediate easement, was urged, and inforced in terms that plainly evinced the court held itself under no obligation to comply with the fanguine expectations of the public. These were represented in such a light, as aimed at shewing they went beyond the ability of the court to compass; and that, in such a fitu-A 2 2

a fituation of distress and confusion as the late commotions had thrown the realm into, it was not confishent with reason, to imagine good order could be restored every where at once: that it was incumbent on all classes to wait with patience and moderation, until the wounds given by the late war began to heal; and that, as soon as the inconveniences and mischiefs occasioned by it, began to subside, all care should be taken to put an end to the complaints they so justly raised; by easing the public of those many burthens which had been brought upon it through the missortunes of the times.

With frequent exhortations of this nature did the court endeavour to pacify the minds of the people. For, although the changes lately made had placed the fupreme power in the hands of the crown, yet, as the date of this fupremacy was quite recent, the court was rather fearful of making trial of fuch violent measures as would too quickly make the public fenfible in what manner it was henceforth to be governed. But still the murmurs increased:

pecially, were clamorous in venting their dipleasure at not being sufficiently distinguished above others, on account of what they had done and suffered for the common cause.

And now it was they began to draw comparisons between Frederick and his father Christian. They recollected the liberty and the domestic happiness they had enjoyed under his reign; and reflected with bitterness, on the calamities, and the loss of freedom that had befallen them under his fon. As experience was beginning to teach them the difference between their present condition and their past, they could not refrain from calling to their minds, and expressing in their difcourses, how much they felt the alteration. This, indeed, was the only remnant of their freedom; and it was not judged entirely fafe by those who were at the head of affairs, to prevent the public indignation from giving itself vent in this manner; lest, by stifling it, a more dangerous method of manifesting it should

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be recurred to by a people who were convinced of the folly they had committed; and among whom numbers were known to wait for the first opportunity of undoing what a fit of absurd desperation had led them to perpetrate, without reflecting how severely mankind usually pays for resolutions taken with anger and preci-

pitation.

Fully aware of this disposition, the court left the discontented at full liberty to complain. Hence, during a long space, the name of Christian was a topic that continued inexhaustible. What happened after the death of Pompey, and the destruction of the republic at Rome, happened again in Denmark, after the demise of Christian IV. and the subversion of the ancient conflitution under his succesfor. The memory of what was now loft, inhanced its value beyond what it had been esteemed before; and the present fystem appeared more odious than its warmest opposers had ever been able to represent it before its establishment. Nor was the partiality of the Romans to Pompey, greater than that of the Danes to their late king. His conduct was extolled, and his government applauded as the noblest models of imitation; and he seemed now, in the remembrance of all men. a most accomplished and a most faultless character. Every transaction that could do him honour was recalled to notice, and mentioned with all that fervour that animates mankind when their spirits are under a violent agitation. His bravery, his moderation, his munificence refounded from every mouth: the zeal he had always shewn in forwarding whatever could conduce to the benefit of the community; the regulations he had framed for that purpose; the various affociations he had formed among the secondary classes for their reciprocal advantage; the vast increase of commerce under his patronage and influence; the buildings he had erected for public use; in short, whatever he had done for the utility or honour of the flate, was anxiously recollected; and, like Pompey's statues, which were ever exciting the Romans to expatiate on his life and actions, Aa4

actions, with uncontroulable predilection, the smallest monuments remaining of Christian's administration occasioned the reign and the deeds of that monarch to be dwelt upon and spoken of with a warmth of admiration and praise, that plainly shewed how much the Danes were distatisfied at their present situation.

The court found, at last, it would be impracticable to flight this popular difcontent in a city, the adherence of which to the new system was carefully to be preferved. But it was not willing, at the fame time, to make any concession that might render the inhabitants any ways independent and more masters of themselves than fuited with the view of being wholly absolute. In order, therefore, to compromise matters, the great promises formerly made were renewed; and, in the mean while, to lull them into filence, by flattering their vanity, fundry empty honours were conferred upon their chief magiftrates; the precedency was affigned to the citizens, over those of all other towns and corporations in Denmark; and fwords of

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value were presented to the officers of the burghers: other inconsiderable donations were made to fuch as were thought worthy of fome notice; and, by way of expressing its gratitude to the inhabitants in general, the court issued an edict; wherein it described, in the most magnificent terms, their valour and public spiritedness during the late war, and during the fiege of Copenhagen in particular; specifying their generofity in supplying the king with large fums of money, for the exigencies of the realm; and their prudence in adopting the most falutary schemes to rescue it from distress. After fundry enumerations in the like strain, it concluded by lamenting with how much grief it felt its inability to reward fo many brave men, in a manner suitable to their high deserts; but that, as a token of the peculiar confideration the crown held itself bound to shew them, and that nothing might be wanting on its part to promote merit and recompence illustrious examples, it was determined to fignalise its respect for them in such a method as should render them

conspicuous to all other classes of subjects. That it was, therefore, the king's
will and pleasure every lawful burgher of
Copenhagen should henceforth be entitled
to wear arms, in the same manner as any
nobleman in the kingdom; and should
have the right of appearing with them, in
all places, and upon all occasions.

Such were the measures the court had recourse to, in order to deliver itself from the importunities of the people of Copenhagen. Their vicinity made it necessary to stifle the clamours of such a multitude; and to win them by complaifance, when more folid and substantial methods of soothing them were wanting. Empty and delufive as these were, they still wrought the defired effect. The inhabitants of this metropolis have ever fince prided themselves in the ridiculous privilege of wearing fwords; though, indeed, not only fuch as are free of the city assume it, but numberless others of the meanest and poorest professions.

As to the residue of the nation, it was obliged to rest satisfied with general acknowledge.

knowledgements of the satisfaction the court had received from its proceedings; and with the warmest, and most ample assurances of the pains that would be taken to render their condition as easy and comfortable as the situation of affairs would admit.

In this unexampled manner did a nation, hitherto renowned for a spirit of freedom, and not less for courage and prowess in arms, fubmit, with the most abfurd devotion and zeal, to the treacherous guidance of men, who had the iniquitous address to persuade them, it was for their honour and interest to divest themselves of their liberties, and facrifice them wholly, and without the least reserve, to the will and pleafure of a court. But, what is more aftonishing, after this senseless facrifice was made, and the fatal fruits of it began almost instantly to appear, instead of expressing a timely repentance of the dishonourable deed they had done; and of betaking themselves to those remedies that were still at hand, by forming resolutions worthy of men who find themselves grofly deceived,

and possess the means of procuring themselves justice; while their arms were yet
in their hands, and they must have clearly
foreseen the treatment that was preparing
for them, they remained entirely inactive;
as if things were carried on as of course
they ought to be; and as if, in devolving
the supreme power into the hands of the
crown, they had also deprived themselves
of the very faculty of discerning right from
wrong.

Since the abolition of the ancient constitution, and the introduction of despotism in Denmark, the minds, and the tempers of the natives, have been gradually declining from that loftiness and generosity which accompanied the better classes, and from that floutness and courage which till then had characterised the common fort. In former days, notwithstanding the credit and influence of the nobles was very great, yet the necessity of keeping upon terms with men by whom they were furrounded on all fides, obliged them to behave with cautiousness and discretion. Though they kept the country

country people much under, still, as they dwelt perpetually amidst them, and confequently spent all their income among their tenants and dependants, the condition of these, and of the inhabitants of the country towns, was highly benefited by the generous manner of living, with which the nobles counter-balanced the exercise of their authority. Besides their domestic munificence, the nobility had other methods of recommending themselves to the attachment of their vaffals. As, through their landed possessions, they commanded in a manner the whole staple riches of the kingdom, their voice and opinion, in all public deliberations, carried a weight with it, which all the other orders of the state could not overpoife. They had therefore the chief disposal of the ways and means of imposing the contributions and and taxes necessary for the support of government. Hence, it may well be prefumed, they would take all care to make these sit as easy on themselves as they well could do, without raifing too great a clamour. The consequence of this partiality their

their vassals could not fail to experience, in a very large measure; as they reaped proportionable advantages with their lords and masters, from the lenity with which their estates were treated. Thus, in many respects, the nobles, though proud and haughty in their personal behaviour, acted, for their own sakes, in the light of patrons.

and protectors.

The result of this general conduct in the nobles was, that the farmers and cultivators of land, and the inhabitants of the villages and boroughs throughout the kingdom, lived in tolerable plenty. Tho' few of them grew rich, yet few of them were indigent; and having a fufficiency of the common necessaries and comforts of life, they were usually a vigorous and hearty generation of men. Such is the picture drawn of the country people in Denmark, antecedent to those times when the imprudent conduct of the nobility gave birth to those discontents and quarrels that occasioned the establishment of absolute monarchy.

Notwithstanding the great subordination they were held in by the nobles, they still were considered as a class of men, not unworthy of forming a part of the states. When these were convened, their deputies, elected by themselves out of their own body, attended; and were confulted, equally with the representatives of the other orders, on all matters of importance. They were excluded from no debates whatever: and without their fuffrages no act was deemed valid. In thort. they participated in all the public rights of other individuals; and, though the last in rank of the different orders of the community, they always met with proper deference and confideration; and often. indeed, acted a part in these assemblies neither wanting in sense nor in spirit.

It is not reasonable to suppose that, claiming so many honours and privileges, they should invariably submit to become mere drudges and instruments of their superiors. Doubtless, the nobility, from the splendor and influence annexed to their birth and riches, were looked upon as the

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principal movers and directors. But, as the clergy, and the burghers of the cities and large corporations were also to be consulted with, before any resolution could be framed, and as they not seldom proved refractory and difficult to manage, it became necessary that the nobles, in order to carry their own points, should secure an interest among the members of the country people; who were, by no means, to be overlooked on those occasions, as their concurrence added great weight to the party they espoused.

From causes of this nature, though, while dispersed in the country, and employed in the various branches of a rustic laborious life, they might rather be undervalued, yet, when collected and brought to unite their strength, under proper heads, this body of men appeared no longer inconsiderable. They frequently afferted the rights of their injured brethren, and procured them effectual relief; chiefly when their affent to any measure was particularly needed.

All this inspired them with a sense of their importance; and helped to animate them in their own defence, when they met with ill-usage, from the prospect of obtaining redress at a proper season. On the other hand, it set bounds to the incroachments of their superiors; who, knowing they might have occasion to call in their aid, some time or other, restrained their pride and overbearingness, and were compelled to treat them with humanity and moderation; lest, by using them with too much severity, they should incur their aversion and resentment, and drive them to dangerous extremities.

From all these considerations, it follows, that the condition of the country people in Denmark, previous to this great revolution, was far removed from slavery. The nobility were, indeed, very powerful, and almost, but not intirely, masters; and from the absolute necessity they were under of keeping fair with the whole, durst not too much molest any part, in particular. This connected the nation in such a manner, that a spirit of reciprocal support Vol. I. B b was

was visible on all public emergencies; and was the source, in fact, of the vigour and resolution that so long presided in the councils and government of Denmark.

To this spirit ought principally to be ascribed the steadiness and alacrity with which the Danes seconded their sovereigns, in the long struggle they maintained to make good their pretentions to the kingdom of Sweden. During this tedious and bloody quarrel, they manifested a patience and constancy that had near tired out the Swedes. Had not fuch a hero as Guftavus Vasa arose, for the preservation of his country, things were brought to such a crisis, by the valour, the policy, and the good fortune of Denmark, that, in spite of the hatred born by the Swedish nation to the Danes; in spite even of the courage displayed by the Swedes, in their numerous encounters with these unceasing enemies, Sweden would, in all probability, have funk in the contest, and been, perhaps, to this day, like Norway, annexed

nexed to Denmark, as a secondary king-

Even after the decision of this terrible dispute, Denmark still continued to enjoy the fuperiority. Though Sweden had recovered its freedom, it still looked on Denmark as a neighbour from whose power and pretentions it had every thing to dread. Until the reign of Gustavus Adolphus, the Swedes were always glad to live in amity with the Danes, and were in no humour to be the aggressors. That great king himself regarded them as a people with whom it behoved him to conduct himself with the utmost circumspection. In short, at the time of this very revolution, they had justly acquired the highest reputation, through the brave and fuccessful refistance they had made against one of the most intrepid and enterprifing captains of the age, at the head of as valiant, and as well disciplined troops, as were known in Europe, commanded by officers of the most consummate experience, and flushed with a career of victories that had rendered Sweden B b 2 the

the most formidable power of the North, and the terror of all its neighbours. With such troops the Danes had to contend; and they behaved like men worthy of disputing with them the palm of military glory.

As persons who from a mediocrity of circumstances are suddenly listed up into great affluence, remain sometimes amazed, as it were, at their good fortune, and puzzled in what manner to behave; Frederick, on finding himself exalted to a summit of power to which he had hitherto been a stranger, became wavering and uncertain how he should exercise it.

In the mean time, however, no precautions were omitted that human fore-fight and penetration could devise in order to support and confirm the system lately introduced. The more completely to effect this purpose, all imaginable care was taken to render divine and inviolable the rights which Frederick had newly acquired; or to speak with more truth, forcibly extorted from the nobles, and obtained from the commons by the basest

ceit. He had not been long feated on the throne of despotism, when, by the advice of those who had been chiefly instrumental in promoting him, he set himfelf to secure the foundations of it, in the most solemn and striking manner. To attain this end, it was refolved, if poffible, to chain down the minds of men: by persuading them that religion itself was concerned in maintaining the authority of the crown, and that it was incumbent upon them to submit to it from principles of conscience. In consequence of this determination, an ordinance was framed, which was ushered into the world under the pompous title of the Royal Law of Denmark. The contents of it were entirely conformable to the design proposed in publishing it. The late revolution was represented as the work of Heaven, that ought to be confidered as acting therein through a particular regard for the glory and interest of the royal family. So refolutely was Frederick's ministry bent on the strengthening of their master's cause, through the immediate affistance and in-Bb3 terposition

terpolition of the Deity, that the very mode of government introduced, was attributed to celestial inspiration. It was afferted, in this celebrated royal law, that God had inclined the hearts of the king's council, and of the feveral states of the kingdom, unanimously to part with all their rights and privileges; to discharge the king from his coronation oath; to cancel all bonds and deeds figned by him for preserving the liberties of the people; and to declare him and his heirs for ever. entitled to an absolute, despotic right to the kingdom of Denmark. Such are the very words contained in the text of this famous piece. After availing himfelf in this confident manner of the concurrence and will of Providence, in bringing about the late revolution, it was no wonder he should use the same latitude of style in telling his subjects, that what they had done was not through conftraint and force; but freely, and after mature deliberation. These identical words make also part of that edict; the whole of which breathes a spirit of tyranny and moisileans: defdespotism, that render it a complete specimen how far they who are actuated by iniquitous ambition will transgress the bounds of sense, truth, and decency; and how readily they can commit the most daring and profligate insults on the feelings and the understandings of men. It shews in no less palpable a manner, how low human nature can stoop; when it can be brought to bear such treatment, without expressing any resentment; when the body of a nation, in its legal, collective capacity, could suffer the obtrusion of such falsehoods, enforced upon them in defiance of their own conviction.

Danish nation reduced, that they bowed the neck to all this indignity with a patience and submission that were the more astonishing, as this law was promulgated within five years after the revolution which it was intended to perfect and to sanctify. In this early period of slavery, the minds of all classes were already so sunk and depressed, as to admit, without any appearance of distatisfaction, the term B b 4

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rible maxims infifted upon in this arbitrary edict; which, exclusive of its establishing the rights and powers of the crown, on the most absurd and groundless foundations, threatens, by a particular clause, the most severe and cruel vengeance to all who shall dare arraign its justice and expediency. Whosoever, says that law, presumes to speak, or to act, any thing which may be prejudicial to the king's absolute power and authority, shall be proceeded against as a traitor to his crown and dignity, and be punishable as guilty of high treason.

But not content with this unmerciful denunciation of wrath and chastisement against all opposers, as if a passive acquiescence was not the utmost that could be expected or desired in the most unlimited tyranny, it requires an active concurrence from all classes in its maintenance and desence. This requisition is made so extensive and universal, that it includes, by positive mention, the individuals of the royal family and their descendants, and even the sovereign himself; who are some

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lemnly commanded to bind themselves with an oath never to be influenced, either through love or fear, through the hope of gain, or the apprehension of damage, to attempt any thing which may tend to diminish the power of the crown. In short, this law is represented as a palladium, on which the grandeur and prosperity of Denmark are wholly to depend; and which it is equally the interest and the duty of all orders and all ranks of men to sacrifice their fortunes and their lives for the support and perpetuation of, to the latest posterity.

From the humility and implicit deference with which this celebrated edict was received, the court was enabled to judge how great a progress the spirit of passiveness had made among the Danes, and how surprisingly their character had been altered in a very short space. The promulgation of this royal law gave, as it were, the finishing blow to the ideas and notions that had so long and so strongly prevailed in that country. It shewed the temper of the inhabitants to be entirely broken, and

fit for moulding into any form of flavishness. This pliability was accordingly soon tried in every manner; and no people, perhaps, ever gave more glaring proofs of tameness and acquiescence in servitude.

As Frederick, however, was a prince of good judgment and differnment, he could not but perceive, that the revolution which had raifed him fo high, had no other foundation than the intestine fends between the nobility and the lower classes; and that, if these feuds should happen to sublide, and amity be restored among them, the eyes of both might be opened to his disadvantage. In order, therefore, to procure further stability to the new system, the court was careful to obviate too friendly a connexion between them. The method devised to effect this, was to leave the nobility in full poffession of the means to molest and tyrannize their vassals. There was, undoubtedly, another motive to induce the court to act in this manner, the danger that would infallibly accrue from too early an oppression of the nobles. The former reason, however, seems to have been

been the weightiest; as, according to the true principles of all despotic administrations, the safety of the head depends upon the disunion of the members: not in that disunion which consists in open enmity and hostile violence, but in that spirit of aversion between individuals, which arises from a clashing of private interests; and from the secret grudges that must necessarily subsist whenever a portion of the people are constitutionally at variance with the other; which must ever be the case, when some classes are either authorized or connived at, in oppressing the other orders of the community.

Conformably to this maxim, the nobles were permitted to rule uncontrouled in their patrimonies; while their tenants, inflead of being accountable to their former masters only, found themselves subjected to the further taxations of the court; and were now reduced to a double vassalage. This melancholy situation soon taught them the difference between the government of one, and the government of many. In a very short time, the face of things bore

bore apparent marks of the unfortunate change their deluded representatives had so blindly applauded, and been so madly instrumental in bringing about.

The consequence was that, instead of that fubordination and obedience the country people had been formerly kept in, by the respect and attachment which hereditary clients will naturally profess for patrons who are able to protect, as well as to controul them, the nobles, having now loft all power, but that of oppressing them, were looked upon henceforward, in no other light but that of tyrannical masters, who revenged themselves on their miserable dependants for the severities and illusage they themselves were liable to. Hence an irreconcileable hatred arose between the nobles and their vaffals: which was propagated by the acrimonious complaints of these latter among the other lower classes; and from thence ascended to the middle ranks; who could not conceal their indignation at feeing the nobility still invested with a power, to deprive them of which would have been the highest

highest gratification to all who were not of their body. Thus murmurs and jealousies encreased daily.

This spirit of discord shortly diffused itself throughout all orders of men. Complaints and discontents from various causes became so universal that the court itself was not free from them; and through the apprehension of what might follow, the government became faint and languid in its operations. Instead of that fire and undauntedness which had so lately animated its councils, in the midst of those calamities and perils that had furrounded it, during the late war, it now adopted a pacific disposition; and grew fearful of looking abroad, from the consciousness of the untoward fituation of affairs at home.

Certain it is, that from the unsettledness which prevailed in Denmark, Frederick judged it expedient to abstain from engaging in any dispute with his neighbours. This it was, that chiefly induced him to wave the pretensions of his crown to interfere in the affairs of Holstein. His ministry,

ministry, who beheld, not without some degree of terror, the displeasure of the people at the management of their concerns, very feriously bethought itself to create no causes of enmity and contention with foreign powers. This determination was foon discovered by these; and, in proportion as the Danish court manifested a dispiritedness in it's proceedings, its enemies naturally rose in audacity. The duke of Holstein, who had hitherto acknowledged a dependance on the crown of Denmark, taking advantage of the diffensions between the king and his subjects, and of the want of firmness they occafioned, ventured to undertake the fetting himself wholly free from this subjection. By improving the favourable opportunities that time and circumstances had thrown into his hands, he succeeded to the fullest of his warmest hopes; and, after a series of bickerings and altercations with the Danish court, wherein its conduct was attended with neither fuccess nor dignity, he found means to conclude a final treaty; whereby the independency of the dukes

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of Holstein was admitted, and confirmed in the clearest and most decisive terms. So depressed, indeed, was the spirit of the Danish ministry, and so willing and desirous were they to secure tranquillity, that Frederick, notwithstanding the personal resolution for which he had always been noted, quite forgot himself at this juncture; and partook so deeply of the public despondency, as to grant a solemn patent to the duke of Holstein; whereby he released him totally from the claim, which the Danish monarchs had so long maintained, of being the lords paramount of that country.

The remainder of his reign, though peaceful, was inglorious. He was now become the uncontrouled and absolute disposer of all things within his kingdom; yet his mind was so perplexed with the prospect of the difficulties he would infallibly meet with in preserving quiet among his own people, that he seems to have thenceforth been fully resolved to confine his cares and solicitude, as far as was possible, solely to his dominions. What undoubtedly

doubtedly contributed to this determinanation, was the consciousness he justly entertained of the backwardness of his subjects to support him, in case of any disagreeable emergency; and, probably, the fear of engaging them, through any ill successes that might befall him, to attempt the annulling of what they had done.

It should, however, be acknowledged, that although this monarch arrived at arbitrary power by the very odious means of deceiving the lower orders of the realm, into a belief that it was necessary for the common good, to alter the constitution; vet, after they had placed him in the feat of absolute royalty, he acted in such a manner as to efface, as far as practicable, the appearance of the despotism that had been established. Those measures excepted, which were indispensibly requisite to confirm and strengthen such an establishment, he took none that betrayed the least inclination to rule otherwise than mild and good-natured mafter; and shewed on all occasions an unfeigned propensity to promote the welfare of his subjects,

both by encouraging whatever tended to their general utility, and by his private benignity and bountifulness to individuals.

The principal object of his attention after the revolution, was to remedy the disorder matters were in at home through the distractions and confusion of the times. This he earnestly and assiduously laboured to accomplish; but that very revolution was the great obstacle that stood in his way. The change of government, tho to heavier perceptions it might not appear in so unfavourable a light, was a weight that hung on all the endeavours that were made to restore things to their former sooting of prosperity.

The people of Denmark had laboured under many hardships during the reign of Christian IV. In the beginning of the reign of Frederick, they still had courage to concur with chearfulness in the enterprizes which his warlike disposition drew him into. When, through a series of missortunes, the affairs of the kingdom were in the most forlorn situation, they stood by him. In all these various trials Vol. I.

they never deviated from the fidelity and attachment which are due from subjects to their prince, while they have reason to be convinced he is earnest in feeking their advantage, or zealous in maintaining their honour. Inspired by these principles, their valour and their loyalty kept equal pace: they exposed their persons with alacrity; and not only submitted without reluctance, to the heaviest charges, but whoever had it in his power, feemed proud to shew his warmth in the defence of the kingdom, by affifting the government with his wealth. Thus immense fums had been raised out of private purses. Christian's long and expensive wars had, in a great measure, been supported by advances of this kind. Frederick had found the same willingness; and owed the safety of his capital, not only to the valour, but to the voluntary contributions of that part of his subjects who were in a condition to afford them.

The reason of this magnanimous behaviour in the Danes was obvious. They knew they were contending for the glory

and the prosperity of the kingdom; and that government did nothing of importance, without confulting the fense and wishes of the nation. Whatever private individuals lent to the public, was secured to them in the name, and by the authority of the states. The good faith with which former loans had been discharged, was a natural encouragement to renew them. In the reign of Christian IV. though his wars and enterprizes of all kinds were end. lefs, yet he found means, by his frugal management, to repay what he borrowed. These were sufficient motives to induce monied men to trust administration with their property. But, fince the reign of Frederick, things had not been conducted in the same manner. Much had been borrowed; but the prodigious efforts this prince had been obliged to make against the late terrible attacks of Sweden, had not only put it out of his power to clear himself of former debts, but had forced him to contract others. It was as much to provide for the payment of these, as for the fettlement of other matters, the Cc2

states had been called together, in that memorable convention which proved their last; by their divesting themselves of all their liberties, and conferring the sole right of governing upon the king.

In confequence of that fatal present, it now became his business to put a finishing hand to this intricate affair. The creditors of the kingdom were many. The first who were to be fatisfied were the army: its arrears were very confiderable; and, till they had received them, it could not be expected the foldiers would fuffer themfelves to be disbanded. In the mean time they were quartered upon the burghers, and the country people; who complained bitterly of their infolence, and called loudly for the speediest measures to be taken in order to pay them off, and rid the subject of the expence and the trouble of maintaining them. This was one of the grievances that lay heaviest on the commons; and the redress of which had been particularly infifted upon, and exprefly promised them. But, after the court had carried its point, it began to relax in the warmth

warmth of its assurances; and this grievance, which was the most intolerable of any, it had the least in its intentions to remove. It was too well acquainted with the utility of a numerous military lift, readily to comply with the defire teftified by the public for a total dismission of the army. Inflead of confulting about the speediest method of doing this, it was deeply busied in contriving how to retain at least the major part of it. Pretences for a while were not wanting. The Swedes had not yet evacuated feveral places that were to be reffored to Denmark, by the late treaty of peace; and during the uncertainty in what manner things might terminate, the court had certainly a right not to disarm. This motive, however did not last long. The treaty being in a short space after executed, nothing remained to cover the defigns of the court. In order therefore to calm the disquietudes of the public, a confiderable reduction was made in the troops, and no more kept up than what the ministry imagined the king-Cc3 dom,

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dom, in general, would suffer without

The difficulties that attended this reduction, in the procuring of fums fufficient to answer the legal demands of the army, shewed what little resources would accrue to the government from the confidence of the subject; and made it evident that it had little to expect from them, in any way but that of imposts and taxations. Hence, to pay off the debts which had been so long accumulating, it became neceffary to retrench every superfluity of expence. Frederick chearfully fet the example; and laboured, during the latter part of his reign, with a particular earnestness, to establish economy in every department of the state.

But the finances of Denmark had been fo dreadfully shattered, in the last wars, and the public credit had suffered so much, through the late revolution, that, as the re-establishment of the one depended on the restoration of the other, the court found insurmountable difficulties in it's

attempts to bring matters into the order proposed. Notwithstanding the great offers made to fuch as would affift it with loans, few durst venture to place their money in fecurities, that feemed fo precarious as those which the court afforded: they confifted chiefly in large extents of land; of which, when he had once taken possession, the owner became a subject of the realm, and, confequently, a dependent on the discretion of the court. This was no great inducement to fuch keenfighted people as the generality of merchants are. It was, however, from these only the court could look for pecuniary supplies. But, after many tedious negociations with the merchants of Lubec. Hamburg, and Holland, the Danish ministry was obliged to sit down with the mortification of having exposed its wants; and of meeting with the most disagreeable repulses from those it had applied to for affistance. The has young of

These disgraceful transactions forcibly manifested in what light the discerning part of the world looked on the late re-

volution in Denmark. In the antecedent reign, the government could find ample resources in the riches of its own subjects. Now, either such as were able were unwilling to lend their money; or elfe the poverty of the realm was so great and diffusive as to include all persons without exception. This latter case is hardly credible, when it is reflected that, during the altercations that preceded, and occafioned the great change in the system of government, the opulence of the nobles, and their ability to give effectual aid to the state, by proportionable contributions on their part, was a thing fo notorious, that their refusal excited an unanimous outery against them; and was, in fact, the principal and materially efficient cause of the revolution itself.

But, besides the nobility, there were considerable numbers of merchants in Denmark. Among these many were known to carry on an extensive trade, and to be men of property. Notwithstanding the late establishment of arbitrary power, the consequences of it had not yet

yet declared themselves in such a manner as to raise much alarm. The court was too discreet to throw off the mask at once. Lenity was still necessary to reconcile the public to the new forms of administration: and nothing very material had yet been done whereby the generality of people could discover the change of their condition. Hence, after the distresses and miseries which had afflicted the country, while the wars continued, were tolerably got over, commerce and trade had partly revived; and, during the residue of Frederick's reign, met indeed with no ill treatment from the ministry. But though the majority of the nation did not foresee what was to be expected, the chief commercial individuals in Denmark were not less aware of it than those abroad; and did not care, therefore, to run a risk of their property any more than the others.

Such were the immediate consequences of this celebrated revolution. The lower classes, who had promised themselves so much selicity from it, and who had, in that expectation, exerted themselves so

vigorously to bring it about, foon perceived their condition was not mended: while men of penetration were fensible that, before a long time was elapsed, it would infallibly become much worse. The middle ranks, who thought, by their coinciding with the views of the crown, to fecure its favour and predilection, found that henceforward, instead of being careffed as formerly, in order to ballance, by their interest, the too great influence of the nobility, they were to be treated with neglect and flight, now they had given up the means of afferting their importance. Some there were who did not scruple to predict, that the difregard and coolness they already experienced, on fundry occasions, were but a prelude to the contempt and ill usage which ere long would prove their fate. That this, indeed, was no more than what necessarily attends all those who are exposed to the mercy of arbitrary masters; as the arrogance inseparable from the possession of uncontroulable authority naturally renders men careless how farthey make it perceptible to the inferior

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rior parts of the community. That it was vain to flatter themselves with the contrary, from motives of justice and propriety: the subordinate situations in life, though decent and respectable in the estimation of men of sense, being still of such a nature, as not to set their incumbents in a point of view sufficiently considerable to merit the notice of persons usually elevated by their pride and haughtiness much too high for common feelings.

This prediction was fully verified in the fucceeding reign. While Frederick lived. his moderation restrained the court from extending its authority in too alarming a manner; and threw a fort of veil over the fituation the subjects were in. The king was fatisfied with the consciousness of the great power he had exalted himself to; and, lest he should become odique, endeayoured by gentleness and affability to soften the terror that naturally accompanies unlimited sway in one person. This it was that so far endeared him to the Danish nation, that he lived respected and beloved. doldw

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loved, and died regretted by the generality of his countrymen: among whom his memory remains in honour to this day; notwithstanding he was the author, or at least the abettor, of the greatest misfortune that can befall a free people, the loss of their liberty and utter reduction to servitude:

But, even in this respect, he had the happiness of compassing his design in a manner which greatly diminished its guilt. Not a drop of blood was shed on this critical occasion; and what still redounds more to his honour, he never proposed to shed any; having made use of terrifying appearances with no other intent than to frighten opponents into his measures. Had they remained undaunted and instexible, there was never a doubt entertained in Denmark, that he would have receded from his purposes, and that things would not have been carried to the extremity they were.

Another very extenuating circumstance is that, by bringing about this great change, he quieted a fermentation in the kingdom which

which threatened to be productive of very terrible consequences. What Tacitus says of Augustus, may, in some measure, be applied to Frederick; that by assuming the supreme power he put an end to discords of which all parties were tired. He had also another felicity in common with that Roman emperor; his name, after his demise, was often recalled with sincere regret, and superiour applause, when his merits were weighed against those of his successor.

This successor was his son Christian V. a prince endowed with many virtues; but whose ambition overpowered all his good qualities. Though his education had been well superintended, and he had improved it greatly by travelling into the principal countries in Europe, yet his aspiring temper got the better of all instructions, and hurried him into a series of enterprizes that proved highly detrimental to the welfare of his people.

At his accession to the throne, the evils occasioned by the dreadful wars between Denmark and Sweden, in his father's time,

were far from remedied. Many of the public debts were still unpaid. The treafury was inadequate to fuch a task; and the late revolution had cut off resources from any other quarter, by destroying all confidence in the government. In fuch a fituation, prudence should have dictated pacific measures; and have pointed out the encouragement of trade, and of such domestic improvements as tended, without hazard, to retrieve the affairs of the kingdom. By purfuing fuch a fystem, during a course of years, Denmark might have recovered from the low state it was in: and Christian, without wasting the blood of his people, would have become much more powerful than if he had succeeded in the many fruitless undertakings he was fo long engaged in.

But the unbridled desire of regaining from Sweden the former possessions of his crown, blinded him to all his real interests. He began his reign by shewing that war was to be the province he would most delight in. Fortification and military discipline were the objects that wholly

wholly engrossed him. These undoubtedly were objects highly becoming a prince; yet, as they superseded all other considerations, and diverted him from those pursuits wherein his subjects were more immediately concerned, and which, therefore, it was incumbent on him to pay at least an equal regard to, they became, in the end, a source of number-less calamities.

In the midst of these, however, it must be confessed he behaved with the most unshaken fortitude. His courage, on all occasions, was remarkably conspicuous; and he wanted neither conduct in the concerting, nor spirit in the executing of his military operations. But, when this has been acknowledged, it ought, on the other hand, to be allowed, that these qualities proved of no other service than to obtain him the reputation of a brave and warlike prince: a title of very little significancy in the eye of reason, unless acquired through the necessity of self-defence, or of asserting indubitable rights

But neither of these was now the case. Sweden would gladly have remained in peace with Denmark. As to the provinces the latter had loft, they had ever proved an inexhaustible fund of contention between the two crowns: and the court of Denmark ought, by past events, to have discovered that it would always be much easier for the Swedes to defend, than for the Danes to attack them. The scale of fortune had now, for many years, been turned in favour of Sweden. Denmark had experienced to its cost; and it would have been wife, after a repetition of several unsuccessful trials, to have defifted from any more: especially when it was confidered that the last had nearly wrought the very destruction of the Danish monarchy.

Had the misfortunes occasioned by the restlessness of Christian V. terminated merely in the loss of power and glory, this loss, though great, could have been borne without desponding; as it might, in no length of time, have been retrieved.

But

But these evils penetrated much deeper. They affected the very vitals of a flate which is not supported on those large extensive foundations that enable the greater European powers to bear the shocks of adverfity without much danger or detriment. In Denmark the apprehension of utter ruin. and the destruction of almost all business was the confequence of these wars. The Danes were prosperous enough in the beginning, owing to the defect of good 1675. management in those who were at the head of affairs, in Sweden, during the minority of Charles XI. and to the youth and inexperience of that prince at his first fetting out. But, in a short time, things were totally reverfed. Fraught with an uncommon genius for military affairs, the young Swedish monarch soon restored the fortune of his country. In the space of less than a year he won three considerable battles, those of Helmstat and Lunden in 1676, and that of Landscroon in 1677; and became, at last, so decisively the superiour in the field, that Christian, with all his firmness and perseverance, found him Vol. I. Dd

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him an overmatch; and notwithstanding some very signal victories at sea, was, at length, obliged to have recourse to a peace; leaving his rival in the quiet and secure possession of those provinces, to recover which so much treasure had been expended, and so much Danish blood spilt in vain.

Henceforth it became a matter of absolute necessity for Christian to live in peace with Charles. The Danish monarch now clearly perceived that a good understanding with that formidable neighbour, was the only method whereby Denmark could be extricated from the defolate condition, into which the violence of his imprudent efforts, to carry on that ruinous war, had thrown it. The burdens of various kinds with which he had loaded his subjects, to maintain that fatal quarrel, were amazing; and entirely fuitable to the despotic system of government which then began to shew itself in its ge-As money could not be nuine colours. procured by loans, or as the fums obtained in this manner were infufficient to fecond

the views of Christian, whose lofty projects required a much larger support, he was constrained, in order to proceed in the execution of them, to have recourse to all kinds of expedients; and to oppress the public by the most vexatious impositions that could harrass and distress a people already impoverished by their multiplicity.

Here it is that we see, in the clearest point of view, the ill-timed obstinacy of Christian, the miserable situation of Denmark at that period, and the tyrannical administration under which it groaned. In the very fecond year of the war he had declared against Sweden, his affairs were in so embarrassed a situation, that he found the usual revenues would never prove adequate to the defigns he had fo unadvisedly undertaken to prosecute. But; as his ambitious mind knew not how to recede, he resolved, at all hazards, to try the extent of the power he was invested with; and how far the Danes were now reconciled to the arbitrary form of government they had imposed upon themselves.

Dd2

In consequence of this determination, he began by adding to many other grievous impositions, a very severe poll-tax on his fubjects; which was collected with the utmost rigour, from the highest to the lowest ranks. This, though a heavy charge, was not without precedents in Denmark, even in its better days. But that which followed was of a nature to make all men fenfible of the forlorn and pitiable condition they were reduced to; and how little account the court made of their fatisfaction or discontent. An ordinance was iffued by the council of state, forbidding individuals exercifing any trade, to employ above one fingle journeyman, beside an apprentice. A regulation of this kind, tending fo directly to the ruin of all business for the sake of increasing the army, could not fail to firike an universal damp on all commerce and industry. Complaints, full of humility, were laid before the throne. But all respect for the dignity of the public was now vanished. The ministry gave no heed to remonftrances that came from people whom they were were able to fet at defiance. The edict remained in full force; and the Danish nation had now ample leifure to ruminate on the fituation to which they had brought themselves.

After the termination of the war with Sweden, Christian had a fair opportunity of directing his chief attention and care to the domestic welfare of his subjects: but he could not overcome his propenfity He renewed the to military enterprizes. pretensions of his predecessors upon Hamburgh. This excited, of course, the jealoufy and refentment of the neighbouring German princes; who immediately united to frustrate his defign. He was, in consequence, obliged to desist; after losing a 1685. great number of men in a variety of attempts; and expending much larger fums than he was able, after a tedious negociation, to obtain from the regency of that city, by way of indemnification for the damages he had fustained in supporting his claims.

Neither was he, in the end, more fuccessful in his altercation with the house Dd3 of

of Holstein. When he first engaged in the dispute with Sweden, he began by feizing, in a very ungenerous manner, tne duke's person. He forced him to deliver his strong places into his hands; and treated his dominions with great feverity; oppressing them with unusual taxes, and keeping no measures with that unfortunate prince. This laid the foundation of that irreconcileable enmity which ever after subsisted between the families of Denmark and of Holstein. Though sometimes suspended, it was never eradicated; and often produced very fatal consequences to both parties. In the mean time Christian, notwithstanding the advantages he had gained at the beginning of the quarrel, was at length compelled, through the interpolition of England, Sweden, and Brandenburgh, to restore all he had taken, and long with-held contrary to honour and equity.

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The part acted in this affair by William III. whom the revolution had lately feated on the British throne, was so disagreeable to Christian, that he became hence-

henceforth inclinable to favour the views and interests of France. That equally ambitious and political power had already purchased his good will by a considerable fubfidy; and it did not omit, on this occasion, to ingratiate itself still farther, by representing the behaviour of the British ministry in a presumptuous, hostile light. Nor was it wanting in raising apprehensions in the court of Denmark, lest the fuperiority Great Britain had acquired at sea might, in conjunction with the naval force of Holland, endanger the freedom of trade and navigation in the North. Infinuations of this fort, together with feasonable remittances, had their effects in a needy and exhausted monarchy. Neither should it be forgotten that the dexterity of the private pensioners and emissaries of France was fignally serviceable to its cause in this conjuncture: they conveyed their fentiments and maxims, in matters relating to government, in a manner that rendered them fo acceptable to those at the helm, that from applauding and adopting the conduct of France, in the internal Dd4 didirection of affairs, these were imperceptibly led to permit the influence of that crown to gain ground in the councils of Denmark, with reference to its foreign concerns.

While Christian was confuming the strength of his kingdom abroad, in the unprofitable undertakings he had fo much at heart, things at home underwent for fatal a mismanagement, that no part of Christendom was more unfortunate. Trade had been continually obstructed through the number of feamen that were prest from the service of the merchants to mann the royal fleets; and the quantity of commercial shipping was daily decreafing. In the interior parts of the realm, the hard usage of the peafants and country people, and the fevere exactions on the possessors of estates, occasioned a general dispiritedness and despondency; and was attended with a woeful neglect and stagnation in the culture and improvement of the land.

Such were the consequences of the ambition of Christian; and yet he was far from

from being a prince of an unfeeling and merciless disposition. On the contrary, he was possessed of great humanity, and remarkably affable and kind in his temper and behaviour. The calamities and diftreffes, the public was afflicted with under his administration, ought therefore to be chiefly alcribed to the unlimited power he was, unhappily for his people, invefted His inclinations were mild: but his fituation required peculiar abilities to moderate the excess of authority annexed to it. The examples fet before him by the other absolute princes of Europe, in his time, were too contagious to be refifted: and he was hurried into an imitation of them, through those false notions of personal glory that usually surround a despotic throne.

Such a summit of elevation, seldom fails, of itself, to raise a monarch above the consideration of what he owes to his subjects: but it was the additional missortune of Christian, to be assailed on every side by the basest flattery that ever was employed to corrupt the heart and pervert

the understanding of a king. He was invironed with courtiers, who, before the downfall of that liberty they well remembered, enjoyed and exercised the utmost freedom in their words and deportment. In order to efface all suspicion of their retaining any attachment to their ancient prerogatives, they studied, by the most abject complaifance, to convince Christian of an unreserved devotion to his interest and fervice: they vied with each other in extolling his measures and defigns: and had he not been endowed with an excellent nature, he must infallibly have been led into much more fatal errors than those of which he was guilty.

When persons of the highest rank make themselves so little in the eye of a sovereign, well he may, at the immense distance at which their adulation removes him from the lower spheres of the community, be hardly able to discern any thing but himself and his own particular concerns. Hence the diminished light in which all other objects appear to him, and the small value he entertains for things

of which he cannot perceive the worth: and hence, with the best intentions, the unreluctance with which he sacrifices what he should principally cherish to the most unimportant and, often through ignorance, to the most iniquitous motives.

Reflections of this fort naturally arise on reviewing the reign of fuch a prince as Christian; in whose time the despotic government introduced into Denmark, feems to have wrought all those direful effects which are so usually and so justly attributed to it. The court now fully exerted the power it had possessed before, without daring to carry it to any length; and the people of Denmark were completely brought to fubmit without murmuring. And, unhappily for him, it was in his time, and greatly through his mifmanagement, the kingdom of Denmark was reduced to a mediocrity of condition that decreased much of its influence; and consequently of the respect with which it had formerly been treated.

From this æra, principally, we are to date the change in the minds of that people,

ple, which has so much transformed them from what they were in preceding times. The universal oppression, which then began to prevail, in a very sew years quite broke their spirits; and at the close of this monarch's reign, his subjects were become as perfectly reconciled with slavery, as if no other system of government had ever been known in that country.

Forty years had near elapsed fince the revolution that had destroyed the former constitution. During this space the court made a gradual progress in afferting, extending, and confirming the claims to which it was entitled, by the donation of the states at the time of that great event. These claims were carried on and maintained with fo much policy and difcretion, that, as they came on but fingly, and in a filent course of succession, the weight of them was not felt as it would indubitably have been, had they manifested themselves all at once. Thus, the minds of the subjects were not too much alarmed, and readily submitted to things in detail, of which the collected mass would

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would have appeared too enormous to be borne by a people long used to another treatment; and who were, therefore, to be familiarized by degrees to what they would, in all probability, have revolted against, had it made too forcible an impression at first.

But, at the conclusion of the last century, the Danes were fettled into a state of perfect refignation and tranquility at their condition. The continual hurry and agitation in which Christian's wars had kept them, during a great part of his reign, had inured them to a fort of military dependence on the court; which it knew perfectly well how to improve. But befide this advantage, and many others easy enough to conceive, the ministry had, by this time, brought to its ultimate perfection the grand and capital instrument of all despotic power. It had found means, under various pretences, to augment the army to a proportion large enough to intimidate, and keep all other classes of the community in the profoundest awe. The many quarrels in which Christian's

ambition engaged him, were a sufficient reason to raise troops; and the necessity of retaining them afterwards on foot, was pleaded from the formidable appearance the Swedish monarchy was making, thro' the indefatigable industry and vigilance of its fovereign. The forces kept in pay by other neighbours, were instanced, together with the large standing armies which it was become fashionable to maintain. throughout all Europe, after the example of Lewis XIV. king of France; a prince whose defigns were justly suspected by all his neighbours to be very far from peaceable, and whose restless politics obliged them to be continually on their guard.

All these motives and pretences very opportunely concurred with the views of the Danish court; and seemed amply to authorize it in the maintenance of a numerous army. The accounts of that time make it amount to forty thousand men: an immense body, when the smallness of the kingdom of Denmark is taken into consideration; and above all, when the scantiness of the means the crown then had

had to support it, is also reflected on. But these were objections of no weight with a ministry that was determined to strain every sinew of the state to maintain them; and was equally resolved to neglect all other pursuits, and indeed to sacrifice them, for this great object, which was the basis on which the whole edifice of government was to rest.

In consequence of this fatal determination, ways and means were devised entirely fuitable to the genius of the extremest despotism. Exclusive of the heavy taxations of all kinds already laid upon the realm, every city, town, and village was compelled to furnish further contributions towards the subsistence of the fol-They were quartered throughout the whole kingdom, not only on the lower fort of people, but even on those of the more decent professions; who, beside the trouble of housing and finding them in many necessaries, were subjected to the natural infolence that accompanies men who know themselves to be unwelcome, but are conscious that no diffatisfaction dare

dare be shewn them; and from thence assume an imperiousness in their behaviour
that renders them intolerable. But, whatever discontent such a method of proceeding might occasion in the public, things
were now brought to such a pass, that it
was borne with that humility which
is found the only way to avoid further ill
usage in a government constructed on principles of tyranny.



END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

